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EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN BANGLADESH WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON UNIVERSALIZATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION

by

Ⓒ Kowsar P. Chowdhury

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

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IN

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Date...29th November 1987.......

ABSTRACT

Bangladesh - like many other Third World countries - was committed to achieve universal primary education (UPE) first by 1975 and then by 1980. The Government of the country viewed education as one of the basic human rights and indispensable for human resource development as a strategy for economic growth. The universalization of primary education was perceived as an essential in order to make the nation literate, to eliminate inequality between different geographical regions and between the sexes, and to achieve economic development. The Government of the country repeatedly stressed the importance of urgency in the achievement of UPE. However, even now, two years after the latest target date of 1980, the country is far from being able to attain the goals and objectives of UPE. The failure is not only quantitative but also qualitative.

In this thesis an attempt was made to analyze the efforts of the Bangladesh Government in achieving the goal of UPE and to identify the factors that acted as an impediment to these efforts. The findings of the study indicate that there were two broad factors which were responsible for the failure of UPE: 1) the contributory factor; 2) the major factor. The contributory factor can be sub-divided into the following categories: a) school related factors, such as inefficiency, low-enrollment, absenteeism, repetition, high dropout rate; b) non-school factors, such

as political instability, natural calamities, population growth, after-effects of the war of liberation and attitudes towards female education. In fact, most of the factors are very much interrelated and therefore, difficult to distinguish.

However, the findings indicate that by far the most single important factor, which contributed to the failure of UPE was the influence of the dominant elite groups. The local elites by virtue of their decision making power in education, as in other socio-political and economic sectors, utilized their influence to expand secondary and higher levels of education which were to benefit their own children at the expense of primary education for the masses, despite the recognition of the importance of UPE. In fact, the state policies, and the structure of the state itself were strongly limited by the prevailing economic structure and its class relations. The economic structure itself is influenced by the state generally, in ways which elevate the power and income of the politically powerful groups.

Further, the influence of the rising urban middle class or upwardly aspiring working class groups, added to the pressures to expand secondary and higher education. These groups were politically very influential on Government decision making processes, because the Government was dependent upon their organized political support. In Bangladesh, the pattern of maintaining and increasing the power of elite groups continued through the existence of the modern sector bias in developmental strategies since the pre-independence period. Resources were allocated mainly to the development of the modern sector which in turn tended to need manpower with secondary and higher levels of education. Hence, primary education was neglected.

The urban modern sector bias in economic activity resulted in a strong urban pull among the population because of the high differential in economic incentives that were available in the modern sector jobs. This contributed to a related bias in the educational system, such as strong orientation towards meeting the educational needs of the urban modern sector. The bias has been reflected in the development budget allocations, the disproportionate expansion of education at the secondary and tertiary levels, unequal educational outcomes among the population in terms of educational attainments and qualitative differences in the educational institutions operating in the rural and urban areas.

In fact, the educational system has helped to reinforce the existing social, economic and political institutions of the larger society and has served the function of reproducing the social, economic and political relationships reflected in the prevailing institutions and ideologies. In short, the dominant groups, who controlled the state machinery and the means of production, used education to perpetuate inequalities in the society.

The study demonstrates that the educational system cannot act independently as a "great equalizer" to bring about social justice, equality and economic development. During the periods of British colonial and Pakistani rule the dominant groups used education as part of the mechanism for exploiting the poor masses. After independence, the Bangladeshi elite followed this same pattern. The findings of the study suggest that without drastic fundamental changes in the economic, political and social structure, the objectives of UPE or any educational reform are unlikely to be successful.

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1. INTRODUCTION

An assumption usually made about education is that it is a main force for effecting major social changes. It was at one time widely believed that it would be the panacea, the solution to all the ills of the world. More specifically in the Third World Countries[1], education was considered a vital element in moving individuals and societies from traditionalism toward modernity, that is, from underdevelopment towards development (the terms "modern" and "developed" are usually regarded as synonymous). Education was perceived as one of the means of modernization which would generate new forces that would bring about changes in the value structure of the peoples in the LDCs and develop in them a set of attitudes appropriate to life in the "modern" world. It has also been maintained that expansion of education would increase equality, equality of opportunity and social justice.

The thrust for modernization and development and the belief in education as an instrument in aiding these efforts induced many LDC's to expand not only the secondary and higher levels of education but also primary education for the masses, which in the ex-colonies had long been neglected by the colonial power. Primary education had become increasingly viewed as an essential prequisite for the development of these countries, because almost all the economically developed countries[2] began universalizing their primary education before markedly expanding their secondary and higher education facilities. Therefore, universal primary education, widely known as UPE, became an important goal for these LDCs. In fact, during the 1960s, a series of international conferences convened by Unesco set a target for achieving UPE in the developing countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America within the shortest possible period.[3]

---

[1] The terms "Third World", "developing countries", "developing nations", "underdeveloped countries(UDC)", "less developed nations(LDC)", or "emergent nation", etc., will be used interchangeably in this thesis.

However, this view exaggerated the potency of education. Educational strategies alone cannot bring about social changes or improve the material conditions of the people. Education is only one part of the total social system, not an extrasocietal agency.[4] Therefore, educational strategies must accompany political and economic strategies which are geared towards building a sound and secure future for the masses by providing them with economic and social security.

The independence from colonial rule after 1945 raised the aspirations of the Third World countries to become more like the economically developed countries. Education was conceived to be an important determinant of national development, which at first was largely seen in materialistic terms such as raising the GNP per capita of a country. It was believed that if the underdeveloped countries followed "rational" economic policies, they could achieve the same levels of per capita consumption, political democracy and equality of income distribution as the economically more developed countries.

---

[2] The terms "Economically developed countries", "materially developed countries"(MDC), "more developed region"(MDR), "western capitalist countries", etc. will be used interchangeably in this thesis to mean the affluent countries of Western Europe and North America.

[3] The objectives of UPE and target dates set by these conferences will be discussed elaborately in chapter 2.

[4] W. B. Brookover and E. L. Erickson, *Sociology of Education* (Illinois: The Dorsey Press, 1975), p.66.

The only way to become "developed" was to achieve a certain growth rate and to copy the institutions of the developed countries.[5] It was also believed that rapid economic growth would "trickle down" to the masses automatically.

Therefore, development strategies of the Third World countries began by focussing on rapid industrialization mainly of the import substitution variety, often at the cost of rural agricultural development, because this was seen as the quickest method of economic growth. Investment in educaton, especially at the secondary and higher levels became necessary to produce middle and high level skilled manpower needed by the industries that were being developed in the small urban-modern sector. Therefore, in order to achieve development, some of these countries spent large amounts of their income mainly on secondary and higher levels of education. This resulted in a decline of the initial enthusiasm to achieve UPE. In fact, primary education was neglected because the developmental strategies being followed were seen to need manpower from secondary and higher educational institution.

---

[5] This is the essence of Rostow's theory of the *Stages of Economic Growth*.

However, the conventional identification of education and economic growth with development was at best an over-simplificaton and at worst misleading. In fact, expansion of education, especially at secondary and higher levels contributed to the many problems faced by the developing countries; it increased disparities between modern and traditional (urban and rural) sectors, and between the poor and the rich. It also aggravated unemployment and underemployment problems not only among the uneducated but also among the graduates from higher educational institutions. Instead of being a great social equalizer, education helped to reinforce and legitimize social and economic inequalities. Moreover, the achievement of UPE did not become a reality, although minimum education for all the masses was regarded as a basic human right.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In Bangladesh, UPE has long been a stated goal. Since the pre-independence period until recently, the goal of UPE had been reiterated on many occasions by national leaders. It has also been documented in the constitution of the country, in the developmental plans and in the reports of the Education Commissions. The Pakistan Education Commission report of 1959 recommended the achievement of UPE by 1970 for the age group 6-11 and by 1975 also for the age group 11-15. In the Third Five Year Plan of Pakistan (1965-70), 1980 was set as a more realistic target date.[6]

After Bangladesh became independent in 1971, it set up an Education Commission in 1974 which again recommended that free primary education up to class V should be made universal by 1980, and that eight years primary education should be made universal by 1983.[7]

However, by 1980 the Government still had not achieved UPE. Not only had not the enrollment target been materialized, but, if one considers the quality of education provided, one sees that little had been made in maintaining or improving the quality of primary education. Furthermore, the broad goals of education, such as socio-economic equality, remain as myth.

The question which therefore arises is why efforts at achieving UPE by 1980 failed. The purposes of this study then are: i)to examine the efforts and the progress that have been made in the universalization of primary education in Bangladesh; and ii)to identify the factors that have impeded the successful achievement of the target.

---

[6] R. L. Smith, *Progress Towards Universal Primary Education: a Commonwealth Survey* (London: Commonwealth Secretariat, 1979), p. 76.

[7] A. F. A. Husain, *Educational Development and Reform in Bangladesh*, Derap Working Paper, No. 106, (Norway: The Chr. Michelsen Institute, 1978), p. 83.

This kind of analysis is likely to be very complex because education in any society is vitally interrelated with social, economic, political and cultural factors. Therefore, it might be difficult to isolate any particular factor which was mainly responsible for the success or failure of any plan for UPE.

However, the achievement of the goal of UPE was largely impeded by educational strategy itself which Bangladesh, like other LDCs, has followed, and which was quite contrary to the initially expressed intentions.[8] In fact, almost all the countries of the Third World without exception shifted their emphasis to secondary and higher levels of education and expanded the enrollments at these levels at a much faster rate than at the primary level (see, for example, Table 2:5). Consequently, most of the countries by the end of the 1970s were not yet within striking distance of UPE, and Coombs predicts that at the present rate many will not achieve it by the end of this century.[9]

In addition, expansion of higher levels of education in the 1960s and 1970s created immense problems of unemployment among highly educated graduates because the economies of these LDCs could not absorb them in the kinds of jobs they had come to expect with their level of education. This no doubt contributed to the increase in the unemployment and underemployment rates in these countries which by the 1970s rose to about 29%. As Todaro indicated,"Government over-investment in post primary education facilities often turns out to be an investment in idle human resources".[10]

---

[8] See P. Coombs, *Future Critical World Issues*, (ICED, 1981).
[9] Ibid,. p. 17.

The country being studied here is Bangladesh - which inherited its present structure of society from the British colonial period. The inherited colonial education system continued to influence the educational strategy of Bangladesh even during the post-independence period. This study will look at the efforts made by the Government of Bangladesh to implement UPE during the period between 1947 to 1980. Some of the issues to be discussed which relate to the main theme of the thesis are: how education facilities, especially at the primary level, are distributed to different social groups and on what basis? Why some people go to school, while others do not? Why some people drop out before completing the primary cycle, while others go on to secondary and tertiary education? Also why are there different kinds of schools for different social classes? The study will also show how the resources were allocated for the different levels of education.

---

[10] M.Todaro, *Economics for a Developing World* (London:Longman, 1979), p. 223. Quoted in Bacchus,"Education for Development in Underdeveloped Countries", *Comparative Education*, Vol. 7, No. 2,1981.

1.2 Justification for the Study

The justification for this study lies in the fact that so far, to the best of my knowledge, no previous attempt has been made to examine: i. the progress towards UPE in Bangladesh; ii. the reasons for the failure in these efforts at achieving UPE; and iii. how these reasons were related to the historical, social, political and economic factors. Most of the studies done in the issue of UPE are of a statistical nature and concentrate on the increase in enrollment figures in primary schools. They lack the focus necessary to explain underachievement of UPE in relation to the broader socio-economic context. This study is an attempt to provide such a focus.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In order to develop a theoretical framework suitable for studying the problem specifically in relation to Bangladesh, it is important to discuss how different social scientists view society and the role of education in society. It is now generally accepted that there are two major competing paradigms existing, namely, the functional and the radical paradigms.[11] In reviewing briefly both these paradigms, the purpose is to locate which is the more relevant in explaining the failure of efforts at introducing

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[11] See C. Hurn, *The Limits and Possibilities of Schooling: An Introduction to the Sociology of Education* (Boston:Allyn and Bacon Inc.,1979), for elaborate discussion on two paradigms.

UPE by 1980 in Bangladesh.

1.3.1 Functional Paradigm:

The functional paradigm is based on the social consensus view which asserts that the society is moving in a fundamentally progressive direction, towards increasing toleration of diverse opinion and more commitment to resolving problems of inequality and injustice. Modern technological society is viewed as increasingly rational and meritocratic; a society where prejudice, racism, intolerance and the ignorance that fostered these evils would eventually disappear; a society where ability and effort count for more than privilege and inherited status; a society which is fundamentally democratic and proceeding gradually toward the achievement of human goals: toward social justice, a more fulfilling life for all the people, and the acceptance of diversity.

Based on the above assumptions the adherents of the functional paradigm argue that educational institutions play two crucial roles: i) imparting cognitive skills, new values and norms necessary for the performance of most roles in the new technological and increasingly complex society and ii) sorting , selecting and allocating individuals to the various roles in society. Therefore, schools in meritocratic and egalitarian societies select the most talented and able persons for the best social positions. There is nothing discriminatory with the society or the educational system itself in performing these tasks. Differential achievement is the result of differences in individual capability - if one is able and talented, one has a chance to climb the highest ladder in the society. As Hurn points out:

> The functional paradigm is an account of what are the most distinctive and important features of modern society and a set of assertions about the role schooling plays in sustaining and supporting these features. At the same time it is the theory of what schools do,how schools are changing and will change in the future,and a justification for high levels of society commitment to schooling. This model views the close relationship between schooling and future status in contemporary society as an essentially rational process of adaption: process the needs of the increasing complex society for talented and expert personnel are met by outputs from the educational system in the form of cognitive skills and the selection of talented individuals.[12]

1.3.2 Radical Paradigm:

Although the above beliefs are still most influential and largely held by educators, social scientists and planners, these beliefs have lost some of their "taken for granted character" in recent years. The radical paradigm, or conflict theory, poses a challenge to almost all the major assumptions of the functional paradigm. The proponents of this paradigm view society as conflicting rather than consensual. There is constant conflict between the dominant groups and the subordinate groups in pursuit of their own interest. The powerful or elite groups in the society manipulate public opinion to preserve their own position of dominance. They might sometimes make symbolic or token concessions to pressures for reform, but such evils as inequalities, racism, sexism, poverty, etc. could only be eliminated by changing the distribution of power in the society.

---

[12] Hurn, *The Limits and Possibilities*, p. 34.

While the functional paradigm tended to de-emphasize the importance of different social classes in the society, the radical paradigm stresses the links between schools and the demands of elites rather than the needs of the whole society. It argues that the major function of formal schooling in a capitalist society is not only one of imparting cognitive and intellectual skills and sorting and selecting talented people but also in maintaining social control and reinforcing and reproducing class-hierarchies and convincing lower class groups of their inferiority.[13] Carnoy argues that:

> The education system was no more just or equal than the economy and society itself -specifically...because schooling was organized to develop and maintain, in the imperial countries,an inherently inequitable and unjust organization of production and political power.[14]

An attempt is made by the radical paradigm to relate the origin and growth of the modern formal education system to the emergence of capitalist production. In this context schools are essentially "channelling colonies" preparing students for their various roles in the occupational hierarchy of society. They help to maintain social order by preparing docile and disciplined workers . Schools are, therefore, geared to reproduce the existing social class differences by selecting and promoting students to higher education.

---

[13] This is the main theme of Bowles'and Gintis' and Carnoy's argument.

[14] Carnoy,*Cultural Imperialism*, p.3.

In the light of the above discussion, it would be argued that although the commitment of the Government of Bangladesh in introducing UPE was motivated, like other developing countries, by the merits of the functional paradigm and even this paradigm was incorporated in educational planning (in fact,almost all the developmental and educational theories of the 1960s occupy an important place within the functional paradigm),the failure to introduce UPE by 1980 can be explained around the ideas of the radical paradigm, i. e., society is conflicting rather than consensual. Indeed, Bangladesh is a class-structured society in which inequalities and disparities not only between different social classes but also between different sexes and geographical areas are widespread. Within this context, the powerful elites, in their own interest, continue to dominate and exploit the masses.

The elites in Bangladesh consist of the richer farmers, professionals, middle and upper echelons of the army bureaucracy and the business classes. Although they comprise a small minority in the country, they wield decisive political and economic power. This group dominates the country in every way. Exploitation and discrimination are widely practised in educational, economic and other aspects of social life by this elite group. Therefore, while resources and energy were supposed to be allocated to educate the masses at the primary level, they were in reality assigned to expand higher levels of education to educate only a few students from the upper socio-economic background. Education for the masses was neglected and dependent on the token concession of elites. Thus in Bangladesh, a small group of politically powerful elites dictated the policies which gave it a disproportionate share of the benefits of development including the provision of educational services.

1.4 Delimitations of the Study

This study will concentrate mainly on the period between 1971, which was the time when Bangladesh became finally independent, and 1980 which was agreed upon both by the Government's developmental plan and the Karachi Plan of Unesco as the target date to achieve UPE. References outside this period would obviously be made in order to explain certain trends that were developing in the society. For example, to understand the structure of the educational system and the society of Bangladesh, a historical background will be provided, which will cover the British colonial period (1757-1947); and the period of Pakistani exploitation of Bangladesh (1947-71).

One great limitation of the study is the lack of an adequate supply of statistical data. This lack acts as an impediment to providing some important information about percentages of school age groups in the traditional schools, the extent of the brain-drain and some other related issues. This absence of national statistics was partly due to the peculiar history of Bangladesh - it has only recently emerged as a nation.

Furthermore, the study deals mainly with the formal educational system. Although traditional religious schools also constitute a parallel system, they are not included in this study. Further, though the study is concerned with social, political and economic factors, it will not provide information on the political debates which occurred over UPE for the period 1947-80 - much of this was not readily available. Therefore, a study of the attitude of the Government towards UPE will be inferred from analysing and assessing the developmental plans of the country to see how much resources were being expended in this area.

1.5 Methodology

The method employed in this study will be both explanatory and analytical. To this end, this study will attempt to analyze and explain Government Development Plans, reports, and policy papers. In doing this, contemporary conference reports, documents, policy papers, reports of different educational activities published by many international organizations, such as Unesco, World Bank, Commonwealth Secretariat will be consulted as important sources of information. Further, a comprehensive library search has been conducted on Bangladesh and on efforts at universalizing primary education in other Third World countries and use will also be made of the relevant books, articles and a few unpublished papers and theses which the writer found.

1.6 Thesis Organization

In this study, there will be five chapters in addition to this introductory chapter. This chapter will attempt to introduce the problem of the study and provide some justification for it along with the theoretical framework which is used in examining the relationship between education and society. It will indicate the delimitations and the methodology used in the study.

Chapter 2 will cover the historical background of UPE in the Third World countries since 1945. For this, the current literature on education, particularly on primary education and development was reviewed. It will discuss the bases on which UPE was justified during the 1950s and the early 1960s in the LDCs - though the discussions will mainly concentrate on the views of different economists and sociologists of education, who have had immense influence on educational policy formulation of the Third World countries. Secondly, this chapter will also shed some light on the progress that was made towards the achievement of UPE by 1980.[15] Chapter 3 will deal with the education system of Bangladesh during the colonial period. The analysis will attempt to show how the educational system was developed under colonialism to serve the needs of colonial power, how colonial power controlled the supply of schooling and neglected mass education and directed the educational policies to control the people of the Sub-continent.

In chapter 4 the socio-economic and political situation of Bangladesh since 1947 will be discussed. Attention will be drawn to the disparities between East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and West Pakistan and the impact which the domination of West Pakistan had on educational underdevelopment of Bangladesh, especially on primary education. It will also evaluate the efforts of the Government in UPE and examine how primary education was treated in relation to other levels of education in different Developmental Plans since 1947.

Chapter 5 will discuss the efforts that were made towards achieving UPE since the emergence of Bangladesh, and will attempt to assess why these efforts by the Government did not result in the realization of the primary education goal by 1980.

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[15] For 1980 it will only give a projected percentage of enrollment in primary schools in Asian countries.

In the final chapter 6, the major reasons for the failure of UPE will be reviewed and some suggested remedies will be discussed. This will be followed by the concluding remarks about the future of UPE in Bangladesh.

2. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION IN THE DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Probably the most important development in many Third World Countries since World War II was the achievement of formal independence by former colonial territories. The achievement of self-government and independence raised high hopes and aspirations among these new nations. They wanted to become more "modern" or "developed" and as a result exerted much effort in this direction. As Smith pointed out:

> "Development" has become a priority -a rising standard of living, industrial and urban growth, the rise of meritocracy; all form part of the expectations of people more able to determine their own future. The planning of development and change has become a major preoccupation of 'new' governments.[16]

During the period of the 1950s and the 1960s when these LDC's were designing strategies for economic, social and political reconstruction after their colonial rule had ended, strong emphasis was placed on the role of education in national development. It had long been viewed that education in some form has an important role to play in the development of so-called "underdeveloped nations". As the World Bank report noted:

> Education was considered a major instrument for the political, social, cultural and economic modernization of the developing world in the 1950's and 1960's. Political and cultural leaders were convinced that a well supported, easily accessible

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[16] R.L.Smith, *Progress Towards Universal Primary Education: A Commonwealth Survey*(London: Commonwealth Secretariat,1979), p.3.

> educational system was an efficient means to make people socially and politically conscious, and, therefore active participants in nation building and cultural progress.[17]

The pressure of modernization gave impetus not only to expand higher levels of education but also to universalization of primary education because it was believed that education provided "the key that unlocks the door to modernization".[18] Therefore, after achieving political independence the former colonial countries continued to stress the importance of education as essential to true independence - as the means of supplying sufficient manpower for the administration of the state and for economic development, as an ingredient of political unity, and a means of creating national consciousness. Further, education was also regarded as a human right, and therefore, governments felt that it should be provided for all the individuals in the country - at least at the fundamental or elementary level. Consequently, almost every newly independent country felt the necessity of setting universal primary education for all the primary school age children as a goal and some of these countries even had its early achievement inscribed in their constitution.[19]

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[17] World Bank,*Education: Sector Working Paper* (Washington D.C.:The World Bank,1974), p. 12.

[18] F.H. Harbison and C.Y.Myers, *Education,Manpower and Economic Growth* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1964), p. 181.

[19] See the constitutions of India in 1947 and Malaysia in 1962.

2.1 Early Efforts in UPE

In 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights by Unesco proclaimed education as one of the rights. Article 26 of the Declaration stated that "everyone has right to education". As a result it was felt that "Education shall be free at least in the elementary and fundamental stages...".[20] Further, the Unesco Declaration of Human Rights gave a very comprehensive definition of education. It was: full development of the human personality; respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms; understanding and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups; a clear and well-informed civic sense, concerned with the welfare of the nation and also with United Nations and world peace.[21]

During this period the concept of "fundamental education" for all, especially in the developing countries, became a popular notion. The term was used to include a certain minimum or basic amount of education - the barest element needed to enable the people to lead healthy, active lives. In this way fundamental education was different from "secondary" and "higher" education, although it laid the foundation on which the other levels of education rested.[22]

The main objective of fundamental education was to reach all sections of the community, children and adults, women as well as men. It was believed that until all children had the opportunity to obtain a sound primary schooling it could not be claimed that the essential minimum fundamental education had been provided. Further it was concerned with adult education too. But for this it was thought that education of a nonformal and practical type could be provided.[23]

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[20] Louis Francois, *The Right to Education: From Proclamation to Achievement 1948-1968* (Paris:Unesco,1968), p. 17.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Unesco, *Fundamental Education: A Description and Programme* (Paris:Unesco,1949), pp. 9-10.

While the concepts of fundamental education and of human rights consideration complemented each other, from 1960 onwards an important new perspective on education - as an instrument of achieving economic growth and development - began to emerge. In the early 1950's, material capital was viewed as the main "missing component" of economic development. However, economists started to point out that a massive injection of capital alone into the underdeveloped countries would not necessarily lead to successful development. For this the LDCs needed a supply of skilled manpower capable of putting capital into fully productive use. Therefore, the emphasis shifted from investment in material capital only to "investment in human capital".

Education was increasingly considered an integral part of economic and social development; an essential condition for raising the standard and quality of life. Economists considered the "human resources" of a country the most productive in terms of their contribution to the development process, observing that in the LDCs human capital constituted only about 10-15% of physical capital against 38% in the economically more developed countries.[24] This view point was well explained by F. Harbison when he said :

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[23] Ibid., p. 14.

> human resources... constitute the ultimate basis for wealth of nations. Capital and natural resources are passive factors of production; human beings are the active agents who accumulate capital, exploit natural resources build social, economic, and political organizations, and carry forward national development. Clearly, a country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilize them effectively in the national economy will be unable to develop everything else.[25]

Since Denison's[26] and Schultz's[27] reintroduction of the idea that "investment in human capital" contributed to economic growth, a large number of studies have been undertaken with a view of assessing human investment needs of particular developing countries. Most of the literature on education and "development" shows a direct relationship between education and economic growth.[28]

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[24] M.K.Bacchus, "Education for Development in underdeveloped Countries".

[25] F. H. Harbison, *Human Resources As The Wealth of Nations* (London: Oxford University Press,1973), p. 3.

[26] E. F.Denson, *The Sources of Economic Growth in the United States and the Alternatives Before Us* (New York: Committee for Economic Development,1962).

[27] See T.W.Schultz, "Investment in Human Capital",in Mark Blaug,(ed.),*Economics of Education* (Harmoudsworth:Penguin,1968), vol. 1, pp. 13-33. "Reflections on Investment in Man",*Journal of Political Economy*, October, 1962, pp. 1-8, "Capital Formation by Education",*Journal of Political Economy* 6, 1960, pp. 571-583.

[28] This assumption would have been less doubtful if more attention were paid to the true dynamics of underdevelopment in the LDCs. The real causes of underdevelopment must be explained with specific reference to history. See for the discussion on the real dynamics of underdevelopment A. G. Frank, *Capitalism and Underdevelopment of Latin America* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969);*Latin America: Underdevelopment or Revolution* (New York: Monthly Review

[28]

It might, therefore, be useful to look at the arguments about education and development by two of the most well-known economists - Schultz and Denison - whose views have had a revolutionary effect upon educational ideology, policies and planning. They attributed a large part of the growth of GNP to a qualitative increase in the educational input into the production process. In fact, Schultz calculated that the rapid rise in schooling in the labor force in the United States accounted for a fifth of the measured growth in the GNP between 1929 and 1957.[29]

The main argument of Schultz and other human capital theorists was that investment in human beings would often bring a greater increase in national income than investment in other tangible goods, such as dams, machines and tools. These views were also shared by Adam Curle, and led him to define underdevelopment as the "failure to make adequate use of human resources".[30] He discussed the problems of development in terms of "intellectual capita" and its utilization in various "stages of development." He believed that economic progress in the developed countries had been due in a significant measure to the superior input of human effort which investment in human capital might have fostered.[31]

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[28] (cont'd)Press,1969); Paul Baran, *The Political Economy of Growth*, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1969).

[29] T. W.Schultz, *The Economic Value of Education* (New York:Colombia University Press, 1963), pp. 44-45.

[30] Adam Curle, *Educational Strategy for Developing Countries* (London:Travistock, 1963), p. 69.

2.1.1 Criticism of Human Capital Theory

There have been increasing criticisms of the human capital theory from different angles. It has been pointed out that in the "residual studies", the contribution of physical capital has been seriously under-estimated by the failure to measure accurately improvements in the quality of capital assets.[32] Human resource economists have considered education as an independent factor in bringing about economic development. They even treated education as an autonomous independent variable in the development process which is certainly not the case. Others have pointed out that the observed differences in earnings between persons with more education and others with less education or no education at all are due more to natural ability, family background, social class membership, size of firm and occupation than to length of schooling.[33] Similarly, Samuel Bowles argues that the contribution of education to either growth or equality is strongly circumscribed by the existing class relations and by the role imposed on schooling by the dominant class, namely the reproduction of the class structure of the dominant mode of production.[34]

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[31] Adam Curle, *Educational Problems of Developing Societies* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1968), p. 3.

[32] Zvi Griliches, "The Sources of Measured Productivity Growth: U.S Agriculture,1940-1960",*Journal Of Political Economy*, vol. 71, No. 4, 1963.

[33] J.N.Morgan, M.H.David, W.J.Cohen, and H.F. Brazer,*Imcome and Welfare in The united States* (McGraw-Hill,1962), as cited in A. F. Husain, *Educational Development and Reform In Bangladesh*, Derap Working paper, (Unpublished)(Norway:The CHR. Michelsen Institute, 1978) p. 4.

Balogh and Streeten have pointed out that the American data do not provide any evidence whether expenditure on education is *cause* or *effect* of superior income. Hence, the fact that richer nations spend more on education than poorer ones might be due to their ability to afford this higher expenditure. Even if one assumes higher education to be a condition of higher earnings, the data do not show whether it is a *sufficient* or necessary condition of economic growth.[35] The authors also note that the observed economic growth in developed societies which is considered to be due to "improvements in knowledge" has taken place in a technical, social, religious, cultural and political milieu which is largely different from that in many of the LDCs today.

Finally it needs to be noted that educational investment would only produce the desired results if the complementary inputs which the milieu may be expected to provide could be actually ensured. Educational investment in its aggregate might, therefore, be of little significance in the context of present day developing societies. In fact, some types of education may foster growth, while other types may actually retard it.[36]

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[34] S. Bowles, "Capitalist Development and Educational Structure", in *World Development*, Vol. 6, No. 6, 1978, pp. 783-796. See also for lengthy discussion on this point H. Gintis and S. Bowles, *Schooling in Capitalist America*, (New York: Basic Books, 1976).

[35] T. Balogh and P.P. Streeten, "The Coefficient of Ignorance" *in Bulletin of The Oxford Institute of Statistics*, Vol. 25, 1963, as reprinted in M. Blaug (ed.) *Economics of Education* 1 (London: Penguin Books, 1968), p. 386.

2.1.2 Education and Development in Developing Countries: Justification for Universal Primary Education

Some comparative studies have tried to find out the relationship between education and economic progress internationally (between countries, both developed and underdeveloped) at a given point in time or within countries over a period of time. An outstanding study in this area has been done by Bowman and Anderson.[37] The authors classified eighty-three countries on the basis of their adult literacy rates in 1950 (of a rudimentary type) and tried to correlate these with GNP per head in 1955. They found that they could divide the countries into three groups. The first group consisted of thirty poor countries with adult literacy rates below 40% in which the 1955 per capita incomes never exceeded $300 (with the exception of the oil-rich country British North Borneo). The second group consisted of twenty-four rich countries with literacy rates over 70%, including twenty-one very rich countries with literacy rates over 90% where the 1955 per capita incomes always exceeded US $500. Between these two groups there were twenty-seven countries in which income was virtually not correlated with literacy and where the literacy rate ranged from 30% to 70%. Although the authors were reluctant to impute causation from the correlations, they however stated that, "it is tempting to conclude that a literacy rate of 30 to 40 percent is a prerequisite to incomes exceeding $200 in most cases and $300 in all".[38] Similarly, they found that something like 90% literacy was necessary to realize incomes over $500.[39] They also observed that a complex industrial society depends upon various kinds of mass-communication media, and, without near universal literacy, these channels can function but imperfectly, requirements for higher levels of education aside. In the study it was apparent that literacy did not always ensure higher per capita incomes. However, rich countries had the economic resources to eradicate illiteracy.[40]

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[36] Ibid.

[37] M. J. Bowman and C. Arnold Anderson, "Concerning the Role of Education in Development", in C. Geertz(ed.), *Old Societies and New States* (New York:Free Press, 1963), also in Unesco, *Readings in The Economics of Education* (Paris:Unesco,1968), pp. 113-131. See also M. Blaug, *An Introduction to the Economics of Education*, (England: Penguin Books, 1970), Chapter 3, for discussion on them.

Several writers have examined the relationship between education and economic development in another way by looking at the historical evidence of the now developed countries. Cipolla[41]

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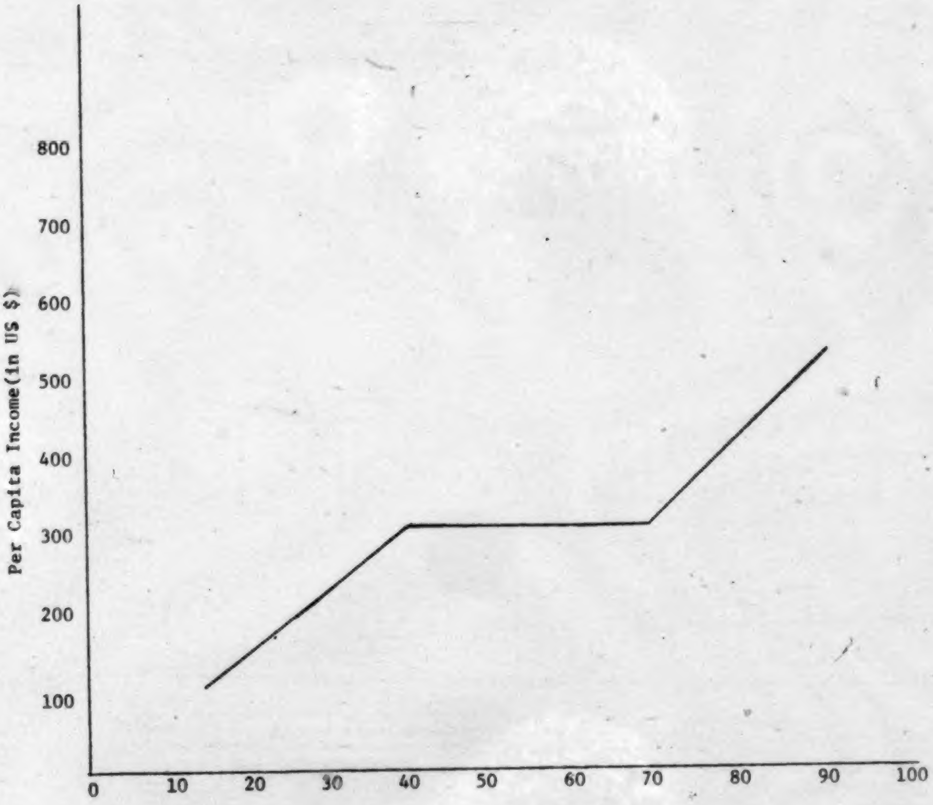
[38] Bowman and Anderson, "Concerning the Role", p. 115.
[39] See Diagram 1.
[40] See for the discussion on this point M. Blaug, *An Introduction to the Economics*, p. 63.
[41] Carlo M. Cipolla, *Literacy and Development in the West* (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd.,1969), see also M. Blaug, *An Introduction to Economics* for discussion on Cipolla, E. G. West, *Education and the State*, (Institute of Economic Affairs, 1965), T. C. Smout, *A History of the Scottish*

DIAGRAM 1



Relationship between literacy rate in 1950 and per capita income in 1955.

Source: M. J. Bowman and C. A. Anderson, "Concerning the Role of Education".

[41] observed that before the Industrial Revolution really commenced, England had already large reserves of literate population. When England started on the road to industrialization, around the middle of the 18th century, the literacy rate was 51%.[42] By 1840, 65% to 75% working class people appeared to have attained rudimentary literacy, and as early as 1800, when England was enjoying a higher standard of living than most of the developing countries of today, 65% to 75% of the population had probably achieved literacy.[43]

Similarly, it was the more literate countries of Europe which first and more easily started their Industrial Revolution. In fact, all the major industrial countries achieved 40% or more literacy rate before reaching steady economic growth. C. A. Anderson concluded from the evidence of history in Britain, France, Czarist Russia and U.S.A. that, "very broadly, the data appear to support a generalization reached also by cross-sectional analysis of contemporary societies: about 40 percent of adult literacy or of primary enrollment is a threshold for economic development".[44] However, he warned that higher levels of education were not sufficient to ensure development if the societies lacked other supporting conditions.

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[41] (cont'd)*People, 1560-1830* (Collins, 1969).

[42] 51% of those who contracted marriage and could sign their name. See Cipolla, pp. 62-63.

[43] One cannot conclude from this any causation that the Industrial Revolution had raised the literacy rate or increased literacy in the earlier centuries promoted industrialization. Because it was also found that around 1850 Prussia and Sweden had more than 80% adult literacy but were much less developed than England economically and industrially. See Cipolla, *Literacy and Development*, p.102.

Reviewing the situation in Japan, which is often held out as a model for the developing countries, H. Passin observed that in the immediate pre-Meiji period, i.e. around about 1868, Japan had in all probability, a male literacy rate of between 40% and 50%.[45] A similar kind of finding was reached in a study by Peaslee which revealed that there is no example of any country achieving significant economic growth in the last 100 years without first enrollling 10% of the total population in primary schools.[46] From his evidence Peaselee concluded that the relationship between education and economic growth suggested that the former preceded and accompanied the latter. He also found out that initial emphasis on primary education more than that on secondary or higher education had been associated with economic growth.

One of the well known studies on the relationship between education and economic development was undertaken by Harbison and Myers,[47]

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[44] C. A. Anderson,"Literacy and Schooling on the Development Threshold: Some Historical Cases", in C. A. Anderson and M.J. Bowman (eds.), *Education and Economic Development*, (Chicago:Aldine Publishing co., 1965), p. 347.

[45] H. Passin,"Portents of Modernity and the Meiji Emergence", in Anderson and Bowman, *Education and Economic Development*, p. 399.

[46] A. L. Peaselee, "Primary School Enrollments and Economic Growth", *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 11, No, 1, 1967, pp. 57-67.

[47] F. H. Harbison and C.A. Myers, "Strategies of Human Resource Development", 1964, as reprinted in M. Blaug (ed.), *Economics of Education: Selected Readings*, Vol. 2 ,

[47] who attempted to establish cross-nationally quantitative relationships between indicators of their "Human Resource Development" (HRD) index and economic growth. They collected data on primary, secondary and tertiary enrollment rates for seventy-five countries and compiled what they term a "composite index of human resource development" for each country, which represented the arithmetic total of:
1) Enrollment of second level of education as a percentage of the age-group fifteen to nineteen, adjusted for length of schooling, and 2) Enrollment at the third level of education as a percentage of the age group, multiplied by a weight of 5. They then ranked the seventy-five countries according to the composite index and divided the countries into four levels or stages of human resource development, i.e.,
1. Underdeveloped, 2. Partially developed 3. Semi-advanced and 4. Advanced.[48]

The study indicated that the average country moving from level one to level four increased its composite index of HRD 3 times faster than GNP per capita, its second level enrollment ratio almost twice as fast, and its third level enrollment ratio five and half times faster than GNP per capita.[49]

They found primary education to be poorly correlated with GNP per capita and asserted that "higher education should be weighted more heavily than second-level".[50] Significant correlation was found between stocks of higher level manpower, i.e., teachers, physicians and dentists, engineers and scientists and the measure of economic development.

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[47] (cont'd)(Harmondsworth:Penguin Books, 1969), pp. 13-60.
[48] Ibid., p. 23.
[49] Ibid., p. 31.

This study came in for strong criticism on methodological grounds. Blaug, while recognizing the value of the authors' advice on man-power policies of poor countries, noted that this advice was unrelated to the Composite Index of enrollments, which was simply a red herring calculated to mislead readers into thinking that there were definite stages of educational development much like Rostow's stages of economic growth.[51] M. J. Bowman also observed that "composite index and other current educational variables are indicators of current educational efforts, not of inputs of human skills into economic activity. At many points the authors write as if youth in school determine production".[52] Another serious criticism was that the weights chosen for enrollment at second and third levels of education in computing the composite index were arbitrary.[53] The division of countries into four different levels of

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[50] Ibid., pp. 23-24.
[51] M. Blaug, *An Introduction to the Economics*, p. 70.
[52] M. J. Bowman, "Review of F. Harbison and C.A. Myers, *Education, Manpower and Economic Growth*, in the *Journal of Political Economy*, Vol. 73, No. 3, 1966. Reprinted in M. Blaug(ed.), *Economics of Education*, Vol. 2, p. 63.
[53] A. K. Sen, "Economic Approaches to Education and Manpower Planning", *Indian Economic Review*, Vol. 1, 1966, as reprinted in M. Blaug(ed.) *Economics of Education*, Vol. 2, pp. 67-75.

"human resource development" was also arbitrary. In focussing on aggregative analysis for each level, the large variations within each were concealed and provided misleading basis for educational expansion in individual countries.[54] It seemed that the authors' policy recommendations were based on their intuitive reasoning. and It is conceivable that in individual situations the optimal strategy prescribed for the group might contribute to a serious misallocation of resources.

Nevertheless, the work of Harbison and Myers had great influence on educational planners and policy makers in many LDC's. The effect of literacy or education on productivity of workers in industry in the context of developing countries is not very clear. There are not enough studies done in this field and requisite data linking literacy and education with earning and skill content of jobs are lacking in most LDCs. A case study of a factory in India suggested that more years of secondary schooling improve worker's performance and ability to learn on the job.[55] Blaug referred to some African studies which indicate that mere literacy makes little difference to the earnings of a worker in urban industry. However, better paid jobs in urban industry seem to have been invariably filled by persons with at least six years of schooling.[56]

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[54] Bowman, "Review of Harbison and Myers", p. 63.

[55] William P. Fuller, "More Evidence Supporting the Demise of Pre-employment Vocational Trade Training: a case study of a factory in India", *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 20 No. 1, 1976, pp.30-39. Also see for similar view Keith Hinchliffe, "Earning Determinants in the Nigerian Textile Industries" in *Comparative Education Review*, Vol 20, No.1, 1976, pp. 48-60.

Studies on the rate of return of schooling have been made for quite a few developing countries, such as India, Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, The Phillipines, Nigeria, Ghana, Kenya, Uganda, Mexico and others. In almost all cases it was found that social rates of return on schooling, particularly at the primary and secondary levels, were quite high. However, the social rate of return was markedly higher for the primary level than for the secondary level. G. Psacharopoulos has calculated overall social rates of return to investment in education in individual countries as a cost-weighted average of the individual rates for each educational level. He found that in the Third World Countries the average return to investment in education (19.9%) was higher than the average return to physical capital (15.1%). However, in the economically developed countries, the opposite was true (returns were at the level of 8.3% and 10.5% respectively).[57] Even after taking into consideration the usually admitted limitations of rate of return analysis - that externalities and non-economic factors are ignored and that there exists quantitative and qualitative deficiencies of data in the developing countries - the results have made out a strong case for a large educational effort in these LDCs, especially at the primary level.

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[56] V. G. Pons, N. Xydias and P. Clement, *Social Implications of Industrialization and Urbanization in Africa South of the Sahara* (Paris: Unesco,1956), also C. Sofer and R. Sofer, *Zinija Transformed: A Social Survey of Multiracial Town* (Kampala:East African Institute of Social Research,1955), both cited in Blaug, *An Introduction to the Economics,* p. 256.

[57] G. Psacharopoulos,*Return to Education An international Comparison,*(New York:Elsevier Scientific Publishing co.,1973), P. 8.

Based on the assumptions that education was a human right, and that it was the main "missing component" of economic development, almost all the countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America had committed themselves to achieve the goal of universal primary education in the shortest possible time. To achieve this goal, these countries at one time directed their attention towards expanding and improving primary education. Many countries passed or enforced legislation to make primary education universal. "There was a keen desire to accelerate expansion and to provide a system of UPE, comparable to that already established in the progressive countries of the world".[58]

The need of UPE was felt so urgently that Unesco organized a series of conferences in Karachi, Addis Ababa and Santiago in the 1960s, where all the above mentioned expectations were quite strikingly reflected in the deliberations and recommendations. As it was mentioned in the case of the Karachi Plan:

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[58] Unesco, *The Needs of Asia in Primary Education: A Plan for the Provision of Compulsory Primary Education in The Region*, Educational Studies and Documents 41 (Paris:Unesco,1961), p. 8.

> the Plan reflects the national will,both of the people and the governments of the countries concerned, to achieve free and compulsory primary education in as short as possible time. Universal primary education has long been recognized as a necessary basis for social advancement and democracy. Only recently however, has it been realized by governments and educators that it also plays a major role in economic development... Evidence from certain countries in Europe and America which have achieved a high level of develpment shows that economic growth is brought about by education and factors of human organization to a greater extent than by physical capital...[59]

In another place it notes that:

> the eventual provision of not less than seven years of universal and compulsory schooling embodies national desires to create the necessary conditions for full democratic growth,such schooling provides a true base for the location and selection of a nation's talent and as such is the foundation of the educational pyramid. It also provides the literacy and knowledge necessary for the full exercise of democratic rights and responsibilities and has been recognized as a basic right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights...[60]

At both the Karachi and the Addis Ababa conferences a goal was set for universal primary education by 1980 for Asian and African regions respectively, while at the Santiago conference, it was agreed upon that the target date should be 1970. However, while the Karachi Plan was solely concerned with UPE, the Addis Ababa and Santiago Plans were mainly concerned about secondary and higher levels of education.

The objectives of the Karachi Plan were to double the expansion rate of primary education that existed between

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[59] Unesco, *Report of Meeting of Ministers of Education of Asian Member States Participating in The Karachi Plan*, Tokyo(Bangkok: Unesco,1962), p. 22.
[60] Unesco, *Report of Meeting*, p. 15.

1959 and 1960. The Plan was concerned with a total population of 774 million in 1960 and an anticipated population of 1,185 million in 1980 in 15 Asian countries. In 1960, 8% (61.9m) of the total population was already in primary schools. Since the basic target of the plan was to double the rate of primary school enrollment, this percentage would have to be increased to about 11% by 1965, 14% by 1970, 17% by 1975 and the desired target of 20% (100% of school age group children) by 1980.[61] The Plan recommended to the member states to increase the total expenditures on education up to 4% to 5% of the GNP by 1980 (target similar to those of Addis Ababa and Santiago Plans).[62]

It was believed that UPE would directly influence the productivity of the individual at his work, assist with the development of attitudes for good citizenship, and thereby improve one's personal sense of discipline and one's contribution to the community and nation. In different ways it was also considered a major means of spreading acceptance of the structural changes needed because of the spread in the use of the progress of technology and the complexity of the modern state.[63] For this, a series of recommendations concerning the planning machinery, the reform of curricula and of text-books, the mobilization of internal resources and the improvement of teachers' status were made by the member-states.

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[61] Unesco, *The Needs of Asia in Primary Education* (Paris: Unesco, 1961), also see the follow-up of the Karachi Plan, *Report of the Meeting of the Ministers of Education of Asian Member*.

[62] It was stated that the goal of the Karachi Plan could only be implemented through a national plan. It had to be closely integrated into the general economic and social development plans of the member states.

Both in the Santiago and the Addis Ababa Plans[64] similar kinds of recommendations emerged. However, in these two plans, priority had been given to expansion of secondary and then higher education. Apart from implementing UPE, the Addis Ababa Plan recommended that 30% of the children completing primary school should go on to secondary education and 20% of the students completing secondary education should be provided with higher education. In the Santiago Plan it was proposed that for the years 1960-65 there should be an increase of 30%, 68% and 28% in the enrollment in first, second and third levels of education respectively and for the years 1965-70, the increases suggested were 25%, 84% and 36% for the same three levels.[65] These targets showed that in terms of relative emphasis the additional efforts were to be placed heavily upon the second-level of education. The program recommended an increase in the enrollment ratio of more than double during the ten year period and that expenditure on education was to be given highest priority in the national plan.

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[63] Unesco, *Report of Meeting of Ministers*, P. 22.

[64] Unesco, *Meeting of Ministers of Education of African Countries Participating in the Implementation of the Addis Ababa Plan: Final Report* (Unesco,1962), also see Ladislav Cerych, *Problems of Aid to Education in Developing Countries* (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1962), for discussion on all three Plans.

[65] Unesco, *A Basis for an Estimate of Educational Targets for Latin America and Financial Resources Needed to Meet them: A Statistical Paper* (Santiago: Unesco, 1962), pp.18-19.

Accordingly, almost every country of the Third World committed itself to expand its educational system. A great effort had been made to achieve UPE, and throughout the decade of the 1960s, tremendous work had been undertaken to increase school facilities and enrollment. Some countries, therefore, by the 1970s managed to double their enrollments at the primary level.

2.2 Progress Towards Universal Primary Education in Developing Countries

Since this study is mainly concerned with universal primary education it is now important to indicate the rates of progress the various regions had achieved towards this goal. The figures supplied should be viewed with caution. Stated increases in enrollment rates are sometimes not very reliable, since the statistics of some countries shows an enrollment ratio of over 100%.[66]

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[66] This happens because many of the under-age and far more who are over-age entered school late or at the right age, or even earlier, but have "repeated" two or three times. Especially when the wrong age group pupils in the school are related through the enrollment ratio to the population of that age, then this kind of distorted picture appears. Also, in many LDCs it is common that when pupils dropout often the teachers of schools do not report that because of fear of losing monetary support. This also inflates the enrollment ratios. See Peter Williams, "Universal Primary Education and The Future" and R. L. Smith, "Progress Towards Universal Primary Schooling:A World Survey" in R.L.Smith(Ed.),

[66] Furthermore, even if it was taken for granted that all the primary school age children of a country were in school, there would remain widespread disparities in quality and in the facilities provided in different areas, such as urban and rural, and for different classes of people. UPE, therefore, does not mean just 100% enrollment of the children of primary school age in schools as is believed by many.[67] It is more than that, and can only be achieved by the provision of equal facilities and quality of teaching to all pupils without discrimination.

Keeping in mind the above statements we should now examine the rate of progress made towards UPE. The following figures taken from Birger Fredriksen's[68] study which supplied data on the increase in primary school enrollment that took place during the period 1960 to 1975 in LDCs. The figures showed that pupil enrollment at the primary level for the LDCs increased from 116m in 1960 to 238m in 1975. The figure for Asia had gone up from 69m to 136m and for Africa and Latin America it had increased from 19m to 44m and 28m to 57m respectively. This progress is reflected in Table 2:1.

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[66] (cont'd)*Universal Primary Education* (London:University of London Institute of Education,1979).

[67] See for definition of UPE; Peter Williams, "UPE and The Future"; Bulletin of the Unesco Regional Office for Education in Asia, *First Level of Education in the Asian Region*(Bangkok:Unesco,1973), p. viii; R.L.Smith, *Progress Towrds UPE*, pp. 6-12.

[68] Birger Fredriksen, "Universal Primary Education In Developing Countries:A Statistical Review" in *Prospects*, Vol. 8, No. 3, 1978.

Table 2:1

Growth of primary-school enrollment,1960-1975.

	Pupils enrollled (in millions)				Average annual growth rate(%)			Increase (%)
Region	1960	1965	1970	1975	60/65	65/70	70/75	
MDC*	127	137	142	134	1.6	0.6	-1.1	6
LDC	116	160	198	238	6.6	4.4	3.3	106
Africa	19	27	34	44	6.5	4.9	5.5	128
South Asia	69	96	116	136	6.9	3.9	3.3	98
Lat.America	28	36	47	57	5.6	5.4	3.9	107

*MDC refers to economically more developed countries.
Source:Fredriksen, p. 364.

There is a marked difference in the percentage increase of enrollment for the economically more developed countries(MDC's) as against other countries. From Table 2:1 it can be seen that there was only a 6% overall increase for the MDC's as compared with 106% increase among the LDC's - where primary school enrollments rose by 44 million during the period 1960-65, 38 million between 1965 and 1970 and 40 million between 1970 and 1975. There was an apparent slowdown in enrollment growth in South Asia between 1965 and 1970 and an overall increase in the LDC's again between 1970 and 1975 caused particularly by strong enrollment growth in Africa. Except in Africa the average annual growth rates showed a decline between 1960 and 1975. The lower rate of growth in Latin America was caused by the fact that many countries of this region had already reached or were approaching universalization quite rapidly by the 1970s.

Table 2:2 provides the unadjusted enrollment ratios for for regions mentioned in Table 2:1. Care should, however, be taken when making comparisons between areas and also when interpreting changes observed within a given period since years of primary levels of education vary from country to country.

The figures in Table 2:2 are gross enrollment ratios. For the developing countries these ratios were 71% and 76% for 1970 and 1975 respectively. But the net enrollment ratios for the same region were only 58% and 62% for 1970 and 1975.[69]

One point worth noting is that there were increasing disparities in the growth of enrollment ratios between different regions and even within regions. As Fredriksen pointed out, the enrollment ratio in 1960 for Latin America exceeded that of South Asia by 26% and that of Africa by 36% and in 1975 the differences became increased by 42% for both regions; while within the Asian region, the Philippines exceeded in 1969 that of Afganistan in 1970 by 87% points and that of Bangladesh by 53% points.[70]

Moreover, as the literature indicated, for someone to become literate and remain so, he/she needs at least four years of schooling - with some writers suggesting that eight to nine years schooling might be necessary. This would

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[69] World Bank, *Education Sector Policy Paper* (Washington:World Bank,1980), p. 104.

[70] Unesco, *First Level Of Education In The Asian Region*, p. xiv.

Table 2:2

Enrollment Ratios for Primary Education, Both sexes.
(Percentage of Population aged 6-11)

Region	1960	1965	1970	1975
MDC	114	118	120	120
LDC	57	66	71	76
Africa	45	54	59	69
South Asia	55	64	66	69
Latin America	81	90	102	111

Source:Fredriksen, P. 366.

require that children not only enroll in class I, but also that they remain and attend school for a sufficient number of years. But what was actually happening in the LDC's was that a large percentage of these children was dropping out before completing the primary school cycle. For every 100 children enrolled in class I only 45 remained in class V. Table 2:3 illustrates the percentage of retention ratio from class I to class V for the different regions of the LDCs.

At this stage, we should turn to Fredriksen again to assess how far the regional enrollment targets have been achieved, because established targets differed between regions and therefore, comparison was not always possible. The assessment, therefore, was limited to the regional objectives expressed in the Karachi Plan. The target set for the primary School age group(6-12) children was seven years

Table 2:3.

Percentages of the Primary-School-Age Pupil Enrolled in Class I Which Reached Classes II, III, IV, and V Respectively in 1970. Both sexes.

Class	Africa	South Asia	Latin America	LDR(Total)
I	100	100	100	100
II	83	69	64	70
III	78	60	54	61
IV	72	52	47	54
V	64	41	41	45

Source:Fredriksen, P. 367.

of schooling.[71] Table 2:4 gives the enrollment ratios for primary education for the Asian region - the targets, actual and projected for 1980 which have been reclassified by Fredriksen. We can see that the region fell far short of the targets that had been established. However, it was not only the enrollment targets that the many Third World countries did not achieve. They also could not achieve the goals such as social equality to which, it was thought, education could contribute. And if the past trend continues, many countries will not achieve UPE even by the end of the century, as the critics of the past development strategies suggested.[72]

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[71] See *The Need of Asia in Primary Education.*

[72] See for criticisms of past educational strategies: Mark Blaug,"The Case For UPE" in R.L.Smith *Universal Primary Education*; P.H.Coombs, *Future Critical World Issues in Education: A Provisional Report*, (ICED,1981); M. K. Bacchus, *Educational Research and Training for Self-reliant Development* , Keynote Address to the INTRA/ACP Seminar, Brussels, Belgium, 1981.

Table 2:4

Primary School Enrollment Ratios for the Asian Region Between 1970 to 1980.

	1970	1975	1980
Target	72.0	81.0	90.0
Actual	66.3	68.6	71.8*

*This figure is projected by Fredriksen.
Source:Fredriksen, P. 368.

The foregoing data revealed that most of the countries of the Third World did not reach the target of UPE by 1980 as agreed upon in Unesco's landmark regional conferences in the early 1960s. The achievment of this goal of UPE was largely impeded by educational strategies which these countries followed and which were quite contrary to the initially expressed intentions.[73] Almost all the countries of the Third World without exception shifted[74]

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[73] See: Bacchus,"Education for Development in Underdeveloped Countries" and P. Coombs, *Future Critical World Issues in Education*.

[74] This shift of emphasis was caused because of the fact that one of the theories of development suggested that it was the modern sector of the economy of LDC's in which inhered the dynamics of development. Sir Arthur Lewis, who formulated the important features of this theory, argued that the centre of economic gravity in the Third World countries must "continuously shift towards industry through continuous reallocation of labour from the agricultural to the industrial sector". Following this development strategy the educational planners started calculating future manpower needs of the LDCs. The planners' estimation was primarily based on the projected needs of the modern sector. This created a need for manpower with the same type of education and training as in the economically more developed countries. The result of this developmental theory was that secondary and higher levels of education began to expand rapidly. On the other hand, expansion of the primary level

[74] their emphasis to secondary and higher levels of education and expanded their enrollments at these levels at a much faster rate than at the primary level(see for example Table 2:5). The emphasis on secondary and tertiary education had resulted in a large section of the population in the LDC's not obtaining a full cycle of primary education, which was essential for functional literacy. Consequently, most of the countries by the end of the 1970s were not yet within striking distance of UPE, and Coombs predicts that at the present rate many will not achieve it by the end of the century.[75]

On the other hand, in spite of this massive denial of education to the primary school-age-children in these various regions - thereby excluding a majority of the population from any opportunity to secure secondary and higher levels of education - there was a growing number of educated unemployed and of underutilized educated manpower in relation to the employment opportunities and occupational skill requirements of these economies. As a result, in the LDCs, the combined unemployment and underemployment rates rose to 29% in 1970s. As Todaro indicates, "Government

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[74] (cont'd)of education lagged behind. The expansion of secondary and higher levels of education created immense problems of development. For the criticism of Arthur Lewis see M. K. Bacchus, *Education for Development or Underdevelopment? (Ontario:Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1980);"Education for Development in Underdeveloped Countries"*, *Comparative Education*, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1981; and R. Dore, *The Diploma Disease* (London: George Allan and Unwin Ltd., 1976).

[75] Coombs, *Future Critical Issues*, p. 17.

Table 2:5

Increase in enrollment of Students in Asia,Africa and Latin America From 1950-1975.

Year	ENROLLMENT(in millions) at First Level	Second Level	Third Level
1950	77.2m	15.15m	1.35m
1975	261.3m	82.5m	12.99m
Absolute Increase	184.1	67.35	11.64m
Percentage Increase (1950-1975)	238.5%	444.5%	862.2%
Average Annual Increase(1950-75)	9.54%	17.78%	34.48%

Source:M.K.Bacchus,"Educational Research and Training For Self Reliant Development" p.2.

over-investment in post primary education facilities often turns out to be an investment in idle human resources".[76] Further, Huq observes that disequilibrium between demand and supply of education and inconsistency between different types of demand for education have become a source of serious tension in many of the Third World countries.[77] According to Coombs, world education is in crisis which is mainly due to the disparity between educational systems and their swift changing environments.[78]

The crisis in education is merely a reflection of the crisis that has taken place in development itself. It is due to the fact that the practices and structures which were a legacy of the colonial system were continued with little change even after national independence. As Irizarry pointed out, the problems of development in the Third World countries are due to the same social, economic and structural factors that accounted for the shortcomings of their strategies of accelerated industrialization. These structures and the industrialization efforts which have been undertaken within them have been framed within the historical evolution of the relations of dependence of the satellite Third World Countries to the economies of the more developed countries.[79]

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[76] M. Todaro, *Economics for a Developing World* (London: Longman, 1979), p. 223, quoted in Bacchus, "Education for Development" p. 217.

[77] M. S. Huq, *Education, Manpower, and Development in South and Southeast Asia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p.2.

[78] Philip H. Coombs, *The World Educational Crisis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 4.

As a result, although the educational expansion which took place during the 1960s was unprecedented in history, the goals of a gradual expansion of economy and the spread of modernization and its benefits for all the people have not been realized. Whatever economic growth took place failed to benefit the majority of the population. On the other hand, the poor in many countries became poorer as a result of the process of growth. Even the gaps between MDCs and LDCs became intensified. As Smith pointed out, the average increase in per capita income between 1974 and 1975 in the MDCs (around US $480) exceeded the average total income per head in the LDCs (US $416).[80]

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[79] R. L. Irizarry, "Overeducation and Unemployment in the Third World: Paradox of Dependent Industrialization", *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 24, No. 3, 1980.

Also, the disparities among the LDCs increased substantially. The average per capita income of the better off countries increased at seven times the rate of some poorer countries between 1960 and 1975.[81] Disparities of income distribution within individual countries, and between rural and urban areas, were also striking. The over emphasis on the small modern sector and capital intensive technology to the relative neglect of the traditional subsistence sector increased the urban-rural disparities, and, in fact, aggravated the overall situation of most of these countries.

In retrospect, it appears that the failure of the educational system was not only due to educational policies but also to the overall development objectives with which educational policies tended to conform. The Third World countries believed that the only way of becoming developed was to achieve a certain growth rate through industrialization and this would necessitate capital and infra-structure investment which could only be obtained from the developed countries. As was previously pointed out it was believed that if the LDC's followed "rational" economic policies, they would have developed to the same levels of output and percentage per capita, political democracy and equality of income distribution as the economically developed world. Therefore, the developmental path selected followed the models provided by the developed countries. The problem was that the developmental objectives themselves were mostly irrelevant to the social and economic conditions prevailing in the Third World countries. Therefore, even where the gross national product per head was raised impressively, there have not been commensurate improvements in the welfare and standards of living of the population, and massive poverty persists. The benefit seemed to have by-passed the poor, and the poor in many countries became actually poorer. Unemployment and underemployment seemed to have been aggravated both in rural and urban areas, particularly in the most densely populated developing countries. With the increase of rural poverty, an increasing number of people lacked the basic human needs such as adequate food, safe drinking water, clothing, shelter, minimum health and educational facilities.

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[80] R.L.Smith, *Progress Towards UPE*, p. 3.
[81] Ibid.

Finally, it must be emphasised that in order to achieve the broad educational goals, there was need for a corresponding change in the overall pattern of development. If the necessary changes do not occur and development effort bypasses the large majority of the population as in the past, the plight of the poor and the under-privileged will continue to deteriorate and the situation might indeed turn out to be an explosive one. It would seem that far-reaching social and economic change would depend on political actions. If this is so, the major function of education should be viewed as raising the level of consciousness of the under-privileged groups and organizing them for political social actions.

3. COLONIAL RULE AND EDUCATION SYSTEM

Bangladesh, an emergent nation, inherited its present social, cultural and economic structures from the British colonial period which have affected the present educational system profoundly. Therefore, although the first steps towards universal primary education were taken as early as 1930 through the Bengal Primary Education Act, the country was still far short of achieving UPE by 1971. Not only that, mass poverty and misery became the distinguishing features of the country. This was also largely due to the colonial legacy that inhibited and still inhibits social changes.[82]

On the eve of European conquest, the Indian Sub-continent[83] and the limited natural resources including land when the population size is taken into account[84] was rich with well established agriculture and industry. The cultures of the peoples were intact. There was a well established educational system for both Hindus and Muslims.[85]The British colonial power was not primarily interested in the overall development and socio-economic improvement of the Indian sub-continent. Their main purpose was trade - extracting raw materials for industrial needs in the U. K. and in developing markets for manufactured British goods. This relationship developed and strengthened English economic hegemony over India and on the other hand India's industry and thereby threw her people into increased poverty and misery for more than a century.[86]

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[82] Memmi elaborately analyses how colonial relations determine the pattern of development or nondevelopment in a colonized country. Colonization in many ways impedes major changes in a society and helps to contribute to its condition of poverty. Fanon goes even further to explain how national bourgeoisie, after achieving power from colonialists, maintains colonial institutions and often even increases the socio-economic power of the elites in the ex-colonial country. The imperialist countries' capitalists continue to reap the rewards of the old colonial relationship through the national bourgeoisie. This group functions as an intermediary and attempts to take over where the Europeans left off. See for detailed discussion, A. Memmi, *The Colonizer and the Colonized*,(Boston: Bacon Press,1957) and F. Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, (Harmondsworth:Penguin Books Ltd.,1963).

[83] (India-Bangladesh-Pakistan) was one country under colonial rule. Thus, in this chapter of colonial period "India" means all three countries. However, this chapter will try to concentrate on the then province Bengal(India was divided into five provinces under colonial rule).

The main purpose of British colonial education was control and not change. The colonial power never really wanted to have India become an independent capitalist country and have Indian competition in trade. Therefore, there was no provision made to prepare a skilled labor force. Educational policies were mainly designed to control the Sub-continent politically and to keep the people economically dependent on Britain. As Carnoy noted:

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[84] See Chapter 5 for detailed picture of recent population size and density.

[85] Indian Statutory Commission, *Interim Report of the Indian Statutory Commission(Review of growth of Education in British India by Auxiliary Committee Appointed by the Commission)* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office,1929), pp. 9-10.

[86] M. Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 80.

> The *intended* function of education was to help Europeans transform the local economic and social structure in ways which strengthened European commercial and political control over the region. Education was used to develop regions to meet European needs.[87]

To attain its perceived goals the British educational policies were changed from time to time. The colonial power in the begining, concentrated on winning the cooperation of already established elites. Missionaries were asked to leave the country because they offended the religious beliefs of these elites. To pacify the elites, an Orientalist policy which provided colleges for them under British control were established. The East India Company's officers both in London and Calcutta were themselves prevented from interfering with Indian sentiment and were expected to support indigeneous Indian institutions. Patronizing oriental learning seemed one way of conciliating traditional elites.[88] Once the British established their hold in India, the role of India in its relation to the metropole changed and so did the educational policies. To make Indians consumers of British goods and to become more capitalistic, education systems were reconstructed.

Therefore, the Anglicist policy was introduced to educate the Indian elites into the norms and values of British society and to give them fluency in the English language. A small group of English-speaking, Europeanized local elites were needed to serve as middlemen between the British high administration and important elements of Indian society. The colonial power also wanted English-trained Indians to serve as low-level bureaucrats in the colonial government. This resulted in some changes in the social-structure which demanded the expansion of higher levels of education. On the other hand, primary education among the masses was neglected. Tuition fees charged in primary schools were relatively high and poor people could not afford to send their children to school.[89] However, education in the vernacular was used at the primary level to reach the "masses". But, funds were limited. In fact, in the beginning, funds were not even available for mass education. As the Statutory Commission Report indicated, the East India Company's Act of 1813 was the first legislative recognition of the right of education to participate in the public revenues. But, mass education was not touched, though some encouragement was given to the production of books in English.[90]

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[87] Ibid., p.82.

[88] Aparna Basu,"Policy and Conflict in India: The Reality and Perception of Education" in P. G. Altbach and G.P.Kelly, *Education and Colonialism* (New York:Longman,1978), p. 54.

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[89] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, pp. 78-82.

[90] Indian Statutory Commission, *Interim Report*, p. 10.

3.1 The Economic Motives of British Conquest and Colonialism

Before the British conquest, Indian society was headed by the Muslim absolute monarchy of the Mughal Empire. In 1757, the British East India Company had defeated both the French Company and the Nawab of Bengal in the Battle of Plassey and became the undisputed ruler of Bengal. Initially, impetus for the conquest of India came from the old-line aristocracy and from mercantile policies, but not from manufacturers. The original design of such policies was the pursuit of monopoly profits through plundering India's goods and selling them in Europe. The British traders used force and snatched everything from the artisans or peasants, and even forced them to buy unnecessary products at high prices.[91] A detailed picture of the process was given by a collector in Dacca to the English Governor in 1762:

> In the first place, a number of merchants have made interest with the people of the factory, hoist English colours on their boats, and carry away their goods under pretence of their being English property. Secondly, the Gomastahs of luckypoor and Dacca factories oblige the merchants [Indian] etc. to take tobacco, cotton, iron and sundry other things, at a price exceeding that of the bazaar, and then extort the money from them by force; besides which they take diet money from the peons, and make them pay a fine for breaking their agreement. By these proceedings the Aurngs and other places are ruined.[92]

Bengal,the most prosperous province ultimately became the most impoverished. Both the industries and agriculture declined under British rule. The British traders used all kinds of force and oppression on the masses to exploit them. As Dutt mentions:

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[91] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 86.

[92] Quoted in R.C.Dutt, *The Economic History of India Under Early British Rule* (London:Routledge and Kegan Paul,1965), pp. 24-25.

> The people of Bengal...never lived under an oppression so far reaching in its effects, extending to every village market and every manufacturer's loom. They had been used to arbitrary acts from men in power, but had never suffered from a system which touched their trades, their occupations, their lives so closely. The springs of their industry were stopped, the sources of their wealth were dried up.[93]

The British tax-assessing methods were even more brutal. Between 1765 and 1770 the company had taken out ten times what it put in. In 1770 a massive famine caused by a bad harvest killed one-third of the Bengali people(about 10 million). Inspite of this, the drain of resources from India to Britain was enormous. After the famine, Warren Hastings, the governor of Calcutta, wrote to the directors of the East India Company (November 3,1772):

> Notwithstanding the loss of at least one-third of the inhabitants of the province, and the consequent decrease of the cultivation,the net collections of the year 1771 exceeded even those of 1768. ...It was naturally to be expected that the diminution of the revenue should have kept an equal pace with other consequences of so great a calamity. That it did not was owing to its being violently kept up to its former standard.[94]

The resource drain was so much that it was argued that the Indian surplus helped fuel the beginnings of the industrial revolution in Britain. The power of the East

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[93] Dutt, *The Economic History*, p. 27.
[94] R.K.Mukherjee, *The Rise and Fall of the East India Company* (Berlin:Deutscher Verlagder Wissenschaften,1958), p. 353, quoted in Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, pp. 86-87.

India Company in India became an impediment to industrialization. The capitalists in England did not want manufactured goods imported from India since this would have interfered with the profit of English manufacturers. On the other hand, they wanted to be able to sell British finished products in India and import Indian raw materials. Both the native Indian industry and the monopoly powers of the company were destroyed. India became a free-trade zone for British export in the beginning of the 19th century. The East India Company was transformed into an administrative body, which became the Government of India (under Parliamentary supervision). The changes which took place during this period gave impetus for the growth of the official state-aided education system.[95]

To destroy the Indian textile industry, the British Parliament imposed a 70% to 80% duty on all cloth imported from India. During the same period, the East India Company allowed Lancashire goods to come to India with at most 3% charges. Because of these strategies, India, once a prosperous country, became dependent on Britain gradually and then completely for manufactured goods. As Carnoy states:

> From an exporting country India became an importing one; from a budding manufacturing potential she retreated into a pure agricultural nation, cities depopulated,peasants falling back on small plots with low productivity, barely above starvation. The surplus from all this was utilized to build

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[95] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p.87.

"liberal" Britain.[96]

3.2 Early Phase of Western Education

The missionaries were actively encouraged at the early stages of British involvement in India. They were the first people who learned the vernacular languages and tried to communicate directly with the people. Missionaries knew the geographic area closely and provided essential information about the social structure, culture, and economic situation. They established the first printing press and translated the Bible and other books into the native languages. In doing so, the missionaries were attempting to introduce a western perspective and religion to accompany their compatriots engaged in commercial activities. The cities were the main centres of missionary work and their activities were mainly instructing and serving the English community and getting to know the native elites, both Hindu and Muslim. However, direct attempts were soon made to convert natives(especially out-castes and depressed classes) to Christianity in the rural areas.[97]

At this time, the missionaries were the only Europeans who set up schools for Indian children and instructed them both in native and English languages. The company protected the missionary activity and provided all the financial assistance to missionaries to advance their educational endeavors until 1770.

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[96] Ibid., p. 88.
[97] Ibid., pp. 88-89.

But once the East India Company had firmly established its political base, it became hostile towards the missionaries' work. At this stage, the company was trying to collaborate with the native Hindu and Muslim elites to extend its legal and governmental powers. The personnel in the company felt that the missionaries were offending the native elites by attacking native customs and religions. Therefore, the company decided to do everything to ban missionary education entirely and to keep missionaries out of its territory in Bengal. The East India Company, instead, introduced the policy of Orientalism. This policy was designed to strengthen and pacify the traditional Indian elites.

However, some missionaries were determined enough and found ways to operate under such hostile political environment. In 1793, Dr. Carey of the Baptist Missionary Society in England arrived at Calcutta and tried to work among the local population. But because of difficulties, he shifted to Malda (North Bengal) and started working as a superintendent in an indigo factory. He used his spare time in translating the New Testament into Bengali, holding daily religious services for the servants on the estate, preaching among the villagers and setting up a school. In 1799, Ward and Marshman, two other missionaries arrived in Calcutta to join him. When the East India Company did not permit them to work in North Bengal, they persuaded Carey to go with them to the Dutch settlement of Serampore fifteen miles from Calcutta - where the Dutch Governor provided them with all the protection they needed. This group came to be known as the famous Serampore Trio. In fact, Carey, Ward and Marshman formed an excellent combination for missionary work. They set up a printing press and translated and printed the Bible into thirty-one different native dialects and also published a number of tracts and pamphlets on useful subjects.[98] Afterwards, this group established its own boys' college, and in 1818 founded the first and very influential daily English news-paper - *Friends of India.*

In the early days there had been severe conflict between these missionary newspapers and the East India Company. The company even prohibited one of these pamphlets because it was a religious tract which offended Muslims and Hindus. But it was not only Christianity that was in dispute, English or western education itself was also under attack by the authorities. There was strong resentment towards the British rule from the native chieftains. There were wars and even a mutiny within the company's native-soldier ranks. The main purpose of the company in the initial phase was therefore, to attempt to consolidate their power, and to that end, pacify the Indian elites.

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[98] J.P.Naik and Syed Nurulla, *A Students' History of Education In India -1800-1973* (Delhi:The Macmillan Co. of India Ltd.,1974), pp. 42-43. Also see Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, pp. 90-91.

3.3 Orientalism

The purpose of the Orientalist policy was to strengthen British political control in India at a time when it was not strong enough. It was not a part of the original policy of the East India Company to provide western formal education to its Indian subjects. However, this was not surprising, since the company was a commercial enterprise and its primary motives were trade and profit. However, from 1757 onward, as the British established their empire in India, they were faced with the need to determine their stance vis-a-vis indigenous Indian institutions.[99] In 1772 Warren Hastings was appointed as Governor of Bengal, and after two years, he became the first Governor-General of the East India Company's entire Dominion in India. He then concentrated on establishing a Supreme Court in Calcutta and began to codify Indian laws for British administrative use. To establish the British rule firmly, Hastings realized that British power had to be based on Indian compliance. He asked the traditional Muslim and Brahmin scholars to codify and translate laws based on the most extreme religious separatism. This policy of Hastings set back the secularization and liberalization that had been taking place under Mughal emperor Akbar and for the previous three hundred years. In 1776 the Hindus got the Gentoo Code and the Muslims also got a separate Mohammedan code later. Missionaries were banned from the territory and the native

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[99] Aparna Basu, "Policy and Conflict in India", pp. 53-54.

Christians were actively discriminated against. For example, positions in the army which were a source of good pay and status were not available to them. Hastings intentionally encouraged Brahminism in order to destroy the power of the Muslims who had previously belonged to the ruling class. The British administration introduced a series of changes in land settlement, later culminated in the Permanent Settlement of 1793, which dispossessed most of the Muslim landowners. They acknowledged as landlords the people who collected rents as subordinate revenue officers on behalf of the Muslim landowners. This ruined the Muslims economically and "reinforced hierarchical stability and created a base of support for British imperialism that lasted right up to the mid-twentieth century".[100]

Hastings, in 1780, founded the Calcutta *Madrassah* in order to "conciliate the Mohammedans of Calcutta...to qualify the sons of Mohammedan gentlemen for responsible and lucrative offices in the State, and to produce competent officers for Courts of Justice".[101] This was seen as one way of attempting to overcome the hostility of the Muslims against the regime. Indeed, the effect was quite favourable. The college received wide response and Hastings had to expand the institution and ask the Court of Directors for additional funding.

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[100] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 94.

[101] A.P. Howell, *Education in British India, Prior to 1854, and in 1870-71* (Calcutta, 1872), p. 1, quoted in Naik and Nurullah, *History of Education*, p. 36.

In 1791, Jonathan Duncan followed Hastings and founded the Benaras Sanskrit College. It was the same political considerations that influenced the establishment of Sanskrit College to conciliate the Hindu population of India. As Duncan explained the purpose:

> Two important advantages seemed desirable from such an establishment the first to the British name and nation in its tendency towards endearing our Government to the native Hindus; by our exceeding in our attention towards them and their systems, the care shown even by their own native princes... . The second principal advantage that may be derived from this institution will be felt in its effect upon the natives... by preserving and disseminating a knowledge of the Hindu law, and providing a nursery of future doctors and expounders thereof, to assist European judges in the due, regular and uniform administration of its genuine letter and spirit to the body of the people .[102]

3.4 Anglicism:The British Reaction against Orientalism

Soon the encouragement of traditional native education was questioned in England. The industrialists wanted to destroy the monopoly of the East India Company's trade and create India as a market for selling goods. Different sects of Protestantism and industrialists, wanted to see India educated and morally cleansed from its own religious decadence and from the company's corruption. Therefore, although there were great differences between these groups, they all agreed that Indian society needed to be transformed radically.

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[102] W.H.Sharp, *Selections from Educational Records*, Vol. 1, p. 3, quoted in Naik and Nurullah, *History of Education*, p. 37.

In 1784 the House of Commons passed an Indian Act which was intended to regulate the activities of the East India Company. Next year Warren Hastings resigned as Governor-General and three years later he was impeached and tried for corruption and scandal. The political situation within England and the hostility to the Company's regime were such that the missionaries got the necessary protection they needed and started educational activities again with full spirit.

In spite of bitter protest from the Court of Directors, the Marquis Wellesley established the Fort William College in Calcutta in 1800. The objectives of this college were to train the European youth and company officials in Indian languages, history, and law. In 1792, Wilberforce, a religious leader of "Clapham sect", attempted to introduce an education clause into the charter, but in vain. However, he kept on struggling and finally in 1813 he succeeded. In that year the new Charter Act directed the East India Company to set aside a minimum of one lakh of rupees annually for Indian education. Missionaries were also to be allowed free movement and activity throughout the territories. The monopoly power of the company was abolished and British industrialists were allowed free access to Indian markets.

The entrance of the colonial government into native education was the result of long controversy. Charles Grant had written as early as the closing decade of the eighteenth century that education should be used to improve the native morals. Grant, an Evangelical, had been associated with the East India Company's administration in Calcutta and London for nearly forty years. He regarded the people of India as ignorant and base and wrote in an influential pamphlet that:

> The true cure of darkness, is the introduction of light. The Hindoos err, because they are ignorant and their errors have never fairly been laid before them. The communication of our light and knowledge to them, would prove the best remedy for their disorders; and this remedy is proposed from a full conviction that if judiciously and patiently applied it would have great and happy effects upon them, effects honourable and advantageous for us.[103]

Grant argued strongly for education in the English language. According to him, English should be the language of court, administration and revenue and the basis for the teaching of the Christian religion and the European culture.

The main purpose of English education revealed in his argument was imperialistic. He said:

> To introduce the language of the conquerors, seems to be an obvious means of assimilating a conquered people to them. The Mahomedans from the beginning of their power employed the Persian language in the affairs of government, and in the public departments. This practice aided them in maintaining their superiority, and enable them, instead of depending blindly on native agents, to look into the conduct and details of public business as well as to keep intelligible registers of the income and expenditure of the State. Natives readily learnt the language of Government, finding that it was necessary in every concern of Revenue and Justice;

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[103] Charles Grant, "Observation on the state of society among the Asiatic subjects of Great Britain, particularly with respect to morals, and on the means of improving it" - written mainly in the year 1792. *Parliamentory Papers*, 1831-1832, Vol. VIII(734), general appendix, 60, in B.T.McCully, *English Education and The Origins of Indian Nationalism* (Gloucester:Peter Smith,1966), p. 11.

> they next became teacher of it; and in all the provinces over which the Mogul Empire extended, it is still understood and taught by numbers of Hindoos.*It would have been in our interest to have followed their example.*(Italics added).
>
> In every progressive step of this work, we shall also serve the original design with which we visited India, that design still so important to this country -the extension of our commerce. Why is it that so few of our manufactures and commodities are vended there? Not merely because the taste of the people is not generally formed to the use of them, but because they have not the means of purchasing them. The proposed improvements would introduce both. As it is, our woollens, our manufactures in iron, copper, and steel; our clocks, watches and toys of different kinds; our glass-ware, and various other articles are admired there,and would sell in great quantities if the people were rich enough to buy them. ...How greatly will our country be thus aided in rising still superior to all her difficulties; and how stable, as well as unrivalled, may we hope her commerce will be. ...This is the noblest species of conquest, and wherever, we may venture to say, our principles and language are introduced, our commerce will follow.[104]

These views were also shared by the Liberals and the Utilitarians. A famous Liberal figure T.B.Macaulay and others attributed economic and commercial prominence of England to the superior education of her people. Macaulay wrote that "a single shelf of good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia".[105] James Mill, an Utilitarian, shared the views of Grant on the "hideous state" of Indian society. In 1817, he published his *History of British India* in which he condemned Indian religion and culture. However, the Utilitarians did not believe that education alone would bring about the desired transformation. They placed greater emphasis on legislative and administrative reforms. But, Mill agreed with Grant and Macaulay that the policy to support oriental education was "originally and fundamentally erroneous". He asserted in a dispatch of the Court of Directors that "the great need should not have been to teach Hindu learning but useful learning". The former he considered as "obscure and worthless knowledge."[106]

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[104] R.Mukherjee, *Rise and Fall of the East India Company* (Berlin:Deutscher Verlagder Wissenschaften,1958), p. 221, quoted in Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, pp. 97-98.

[105] Macaulay's Minute of February 2, 1835, in Basu, "Policy and Conflict in India", p. 55.

However, despite this general concern about education, expenditures on education remained very limited up to the twentieth century. There were less than 10,000 students enrolled in government-sponsored English speaking schools. In 1845, there were 7,036 students in all the institutions of Bengal, Assam and Orissa. But, all of these were not English-speaking.[107]

As the English became the political force in India, they started to initiate important educational changes. Bengal was the first province where marked changes took place. It was in this presidency where the Government offices and the commercial activity of Calcutta produced a greater degree of intercource between Europeans and natives. The need for education in the English language was felt fairly early. By the early 19th century, there already existed a very few English-speaking people who were wealthy natives. This small group of people had begun to adopt English dress, to adorn their homes with English furniture and to assume English manners. As Heber reported, they had "very handsome carriages, often built in England, they speak tolerable English, and they show a considerable liking for European society...".[108] It is not surprising to see that this group of elites wanted to have their sons acquire a thorough English culture.

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[106] Ibid., p.55.
[107] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 98.

Therefore, in 1816, Hindu College, one of the earliest institutions, was founded at Calcutta for the education of Hindu youth in the new learning without any assitance from the Government. This school represented the aspirations of a group of native elites who wanted education in English because it was useful for worldly success. Their number included Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a victim of the policy of cultural conquest, who believed that India must assimilate Western knowledge for her own regeneration. Roy was the first leader of the reform movement of Hindu religion who founded the Brahmo Samaj (a Hindu theistic reform sect) and accepted British rule as a good thing and the British as friends in an attempt to reform the Hindu traditions in a more secular and Western direction. In 1823, in a letter to Lord Amherst, the acting governor-general, Roy vigorously protested against the establishment of the Sanskrit College in Calcutta, which, according to him, would only "load the minds of youth with grammatical niceties and metaphysical distinctions of little or no practical use to the possessors or to society". Individuals like Roy thought that adopting the language and culture of the metropolitan power was the only way by which India could be modernized.[109]

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[108] Reginald Heber, *Narrative of a Journey Through the Upper Provinces of India from Calcutta to Bombay, 1824-25, with notes upon Ceylon, and account of a journey to Madras and the southern provinces, 1826, and letters written in India* (4th edition,London,1829), quoted in McCully, *English Education*, p. 20.

In 1832, the first Reform Bill was passed in the British Parliament and the middle classes with their free trade capitalism became the political power. Next year in 1833 when the Charter Act was passed, the East India Company was once again in financial difficulty. The trading powers of the East India Company were abolished and it was constituted as a purely administrative body(The Government of India). In that period the governor-general's major task was to economize. Since one of the major expenses was the high salaries of English officers, consideration was given to employing Indian subordinates in the judicial and revenue branches. Provision was made for hiring Indians to work cheaply. It was argued, by Hold Mackenzie, among others, that employment of Indians under English control would strengthen their attachment to British rule.[110]

To make these Indians loyal to British administrators on a governmental level, English education was required. Also, English education was considered essential in order to sell the British consumer goods to Indians. The British administrators expected English-educated Indians to develop a taste for the products of Lancashire and Sheffield. As Macaulay remarked, he would prefer that Indians were ruled by their own kings "but wearing our broadcloth, and working with our cutlery", that they should not be "too ignorant or too poor to value and buy English manufactures"[111]. This statement reveals the economic motive of the British to make India dependent on Britain.

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[109] Basu,"Policy and conflict", pp. 55-56.
[110] *Parliamentary Papers(H.L.)* NO. 445(111), 1833, p. 142, in Basu, "Policy and Conflict", p. 58.

The policy laid down in 1835 which had been reaffirmed in Wood's Despatch of 1854 was continued with very little modification even after 1947. The government decided to concentrate on higher education for the upper classes. The British wanted a small class of English educated Indians to act, in Macaulay's words, as "interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern...a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect".[112] A further justification for the policy of educating the elites was given by his "filtration theory" which assumed that if education were provided for the upper classes it would gradually trickle down to the masses.

The crucial point is the 'form' that this education for the elite took. As Carnoy pointed out:

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[111] G. M. Young, (ed.), *Speeches by Lord Macaulay* (London: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 153, in ibid.
[112] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 100.

> The British did not try to instill in the natives a deep grasp of the fundamental principles of economics, technology, science, and politics; rather they were content to force their pupils to ape and recite English literature, philosophy, and metaphysics in the most slavish imitative fashion... More importantly it instilled in them a respect and awe for the aristocratic virtues of the majestic English language and culture, and a corresponding contempt and disdain for their own background.[113]

The final outcome of the "downward filtration theory" was that:

> The theory of "filtering down" was an evident example of wishful thinking on the part of the government. After intense English education, the educated were practically cut off from their surroundings. For all practical purposes in manners, clothes, language and tastes they became English-minded and developed a dislike for those who, unlike themselves, had not taken to an English education. *Obviously, such persons would never return to the illiterate masses.*(Italics added)[114]

The demand for English education was rapid after the announcement of Lord Hardinge in 1844 that Indians who had English education would receive preference in all goverment jobs. These jobs were lucrative by Indian standards and raised the status of those people who could get one of them. The result was that almost the whole educational system, especially in Bengal, started to gear toward training individuals for the government service. However, as there were not enough jobs available, many of these educated became mere clerks, who were unable to use their literacy and legal skills for any business, industrial or scientific professions. This kind of bias still exists in the education system of the countries of the Sub-continent. In 1856 in a report, H. Woodrow, a school inspector in East Bengal (now Bangladesh), complained that students in goverment schools valued education:

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[113] Ibid., p.101.
[114] Ibid., p. 102.

> solely as a means of getting money. People have gradually forced themselves to acknowledge the English school as a necessity; not that they have at present any value for our learning, but they consider the acquisition of our language as necessary for the advancement of their children in this life.[115]

3.5 Mass Education

While the new educational policy succeeded in producing the mediatory group - the "comprador elites" - it also contributed to stifling mass education, increasing the gap between the upper classes and the masses and thereby reducing the effectiveness of the mediatory role of the former. The colonial government soon realized the limitation of the new policy to some extent. In 1853, when the East India Company's Charter was up for renewal, a Select Committee of the House of Commons held a thorough inquiry into educational development in India, and on the basis of this inquiry, the Court of Directors sent down their Educational Despatch in 1854 - generally known as the Wood Education Despatch - which sought to establish an Anglo-vernacular system of education. The Despatch observed:

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[115] Ibid., p.103.

> ...our object is to extend European knowledge throughout all classes of the people. We have shown that this object must be effected by means of the English language in the higher branches of instruction, and by the vernacular languages of India to the great mass of the people...
>
> The higher classes will now be gradually called upon to depend upon themselves; and your attention has been more especially directed to the education of the middle classes and lower classes, both by establishment of fitting schools for this purpose and by means of a careful encouragement of the native schools which exist, and have existed from time immemorial, in every village.[116]

The Despatch introduced an education department in each province of British India. In practice, however, the so-called mixed system of education continued to be Western in style, elitist in character, and not accessible to the masses. The Despatch was directed to establishing universities and teacher-training colleges and introduced the system of grant-in-aid. It also had provision for secondary education and for primary schooling.

But the plans of mass education drafted by the Despatch were not realized. Even after more than seven decades, the provision for imparting education through native languages in high schools remained far from being materialized. Higher education was considered more seriously. As Carnoy observes, "the purpose of the reform was to *rationalize* the system of selecting educated youth for civil service appointments, not to change".[117] To control more centrally the number and types of labor available, the examination procedures became more selective at the university level. Also, a policy was formulated for mass education in 1857, and spoken native languages were to be the medium of instruction at this level.

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[116] Ibid., pp. 104-5.
[117] Ibid.

Therefore, a two-tiered system evolved: English for the elite, vernacular for the masses. The essential points of these policies were laid out by Lord Falkland five years before the Wood Despatch:

> a. Provision for superior education through the medium of English strictly limited, however, to the education of the wealthy who can afford to pay for it, the intelligent among the native youth who can establish their claims to admission into the English schools by a standard of acquirements, and the class of young men who are trained up as masters of the vernacular schools(the upper 10.000).
>
> b. The production through the same medium of a superior class of district school masters and the providing for them of an adequate scale of salaries.
>
> c. The education of the people under these masters in vernacular schools.
>
> d. The systematic encouragement of translations into the vernacular from works of science and general literature.[118]

Virtually nothing had been done towards the education of the masses. The whole education system was top-heavy and lopsided. While there was a network of colleges and high schools, primary education lagged behind. Therefore, seventy years after the Wood Despatch, only one-sixth of the children of school-age were in school. Total government expenditures on education in 1921-22 only amounted to 13.2 rupees per student(about $4). The expenditure on per primary school-age child became 67c because of the small portion of the schooled children. Educational expenditures did climb from 6% of military expenditures in 1882 to about 9% in 1920.[119] But more than 25% of the educational budget went for university education.[120] This policy resulted in an almost stable literacy rate of the population between 1835-38 and 1931. In 1835-38 the percentage of adult literates was 4.4, and in 1931, it was only 6.0. Similarly, in 1835-38, the percentage of primary school age children at school was 5.8 which was 7.0 in 1931. Because of colonial policy the Indian-Subcontinent and therefore, Bangladesh suffered from educational underdevelopment like other countries under colonial rule.

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[118] Ibid., pp. 105-106.

One important provision of the Wood Despatch was that grants-in-aid would be given only to those primary schools which charged a monthly fee to all their pupils, and that the local community had to help pay part of the cost of schooling. The policy makers naively believed that this would solve the difficulties in Indian education as it had solved those of mass education in England[121] with the British government conveniently not having to spend very much on education. The result was that only the rich people were able to organize and pay for their children's education.

The grants-in-aid policy had devasting effects on the indigenous informal village schools, most of which vanished in subsequent years. By 1902, there were no village schools in British India. The authorities insisted, instead, on training teachers the way the British wanted and on having the schools to be strict about class schedules and charging fees. Carnoy states:

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[119] Ibid., pp. 107-108.

[120] See Nurullah and Naik, *History of Education*, 1951 edition, p. 288, in Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, pp. 146-147.

[121] Nurullah and Naik, *History of Education*, pp. 139-142.

> The school system was therefore organized to keep a tight control over whatever education existed. This again confirms the political goals of British educational policies as practiced in India. The old social, economic, and educational system was broken down, and a very tightly controlled and not very extensive new system was put in to replace it... Education was developed to provide Indian subadministrators and clerks for the British government service - thus, the higher secondary and university system developed after 1854. Indians trained as subadministrators were thróughly anglicized by the curriculum and selection process of the higher levels of schooling. At the same time, a primary school system was installed which was limited in the number of children it reached and was controlled to prevent an independent base of power and ideas to develop.[122]

Education was not only quantitatively inadequate but also qualitatively deficient in the colonial period. It had a predominantly literary bias, there being an overemphasis on the study of Arts subjects. A strong linguistic and classical bias in the curriculum of the old universities was apparent. The curriculum consisted of English literature, which included Shakespeare, Milton, Pope's Homer and Pryden's Virgil; history, mainly of Greece, Rome, England and modern Europe. There were almost no technical and commercial courses in the curriculum. However, this system was closely tied to the employment policy of the British colonial government. All higher jobs in the engineering, railway, post and telegraphs services, in fact, all the best job opportunities were kept for Europeans. In the private sector, modern methods of manufacture were confined to European farms and when these industries required expertise in technology, they always preferred Europeans. Therefore, there were few opportunities for qualified Indians.[123]

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[122] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p.109.

The colonial government did not have any policy of industrialization and did not even encourage private enterprise in the Sub-continent.[124] With restricted industrial growth and small-holding plantation agriculture the demand for trained labor was limited. Also, since the colonial government had a policy of controlling the expansion of primary education, most of the available revenue was spent on the military, and within the small education sector, on higher levels of education.[125] The opportunities for educated Indians were therefore, as was indicated above, limited to a relatively few jobs in the bureaucracy of the colonial government.

While the number of western primary schools was limited, secondary schools, largely private and primarily to prepare students for college education, were expanding. Once some local students began to acquire English education, which led them to jobs within the colonial administrtion, the demand for secondary education increased steadily. As secondary education expanded, the demand for university education also grew, and as a result the number of universities increased.[126] English was used almost exclusively as the medium of instruction in the "western" schools at both secondary and university levels. The people who could climb up to these levels became alienated from their own culture and people.

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[123] Basu, "Policy and Conflict", p.60.
[124] Ibid.
[125] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, pp. 111-112.

In 1919, there was a resistance to the proposal that the Department of Education be transferred to the control of the Indian ministers. A great controversy arose over the control of secondary and higher education. It was felt by the government of India that:

> ...there is a compelling case for the transfer of primary education. ...We may say that in our minds there is an equally compelling case for retaining secondary and university education in the hands of the official and more experienced half of the Provincial Governments. India stands today in a critical position; and her immediate future apart from her slower political growth, depends on the solution of social, economic, and industrial problems to which a good system of secondary education is the chief key.[127]

This again indicates that the British placed far more importance on secondary and higher levels of education in their colonization process of India and they attached correspondingly less emphasis on primary education.

One unexpected consequence, however, of the British style educational system was that it appeared to promote nationalist sentiments and aspirations instead of serving as a means of mobilising support for British rule. As McCully observed:

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[126] Ibid.
[127] Ibid.

> Schooled in a foreign culture, speaking a foreign tongue when occasion demanded, indoctrinated with foreign political, social and economic concepts, the native intelligentsia developed individual and collective aspirations very different from those once expected. Instead of being the staunch ally of the Anglo-Indian administration as Grant and Trevelyen had prophesied, educated natives became vigorous competitors of the bureaucracy. Instead of serving as a buttress of British imperialism, they had turned into its bitterest critics. Instead of dwelling with loving appreciation upon the benevolence of their rulers, they found constant fault with those in authority against whom they raised the cry of "India for Indians".[128]

Abernethy has made the same observation for Nigeria when he noted: "in any event the most significant consequence of colonial education was an unforseen one: the demise of colonial rule".[129]

However, in order to shape an educational policy which would counteract this nationalistic trend and promote a neutral and purely academic type of education, two education Commissions were appointed, i.e. the Hunter Commission (1882) and the University Commission of 1902. As a result of their recommendations, curricula were given greater "Indian content" and Indian languages gained greater usage. "Oriental colleges" which were established to promote traditional culture, however, did not enjoy much popularity among students, while there was little evidence that the new educational policy had succeeded in decreasing the "revolutionary effect" of Western ideas on the students.[130]

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[128] B. T. McCully, *English Education*, p.396.
[129] David B. Abernethy, *The Political Dilemma of Popular Education: An African Case* (California: Stanford University Press, 1969), p. 16.

The beginning of the twentieth century witnessed efforts to expand and improve educational administration and to increase the allocation of resources to education. While World War I caused a setback to education, it accentuated political movements which contributed to far-reaching administrative reforms in the post-war period. Under the reforms of 1919-21, administration of some departments in the provinces including education was entrusted to ministers enjoying the confidence of the Legislature in which non-officials formed the majority. It is significant that legislation was enacted in 1919 for the first time for the introduction of free primary education within municipalities, and in 1921 this was extended to the rural unions.[131] An important legislation, such as the Bengal Primary Education Act(1930) sought to extend free primary education throughout the province, organised through District Primary Education Boards.

The period between the two World Wars saw some expansion of the education system, but World War II hit the educational system particularly hard, due to severe inflation which caused great hardship to the already poorly-paid teachers, governmental occupation of many educational institutions for war purposes and reduced supplies of educational materials. These adverse effects persisted well after the war. After the independence in 1947, the educational system faced a fresh crisis due to the large-scale exodus of teachers from East Pakistan to India. It took a considerable time for the vacuum to be filled. Although at the time of independence in 1947 East Pakistan was somewhat more advanced than West Pakistan in education, at any rate in the number of primary shcools and in their enrollment, it gradually began to lag behind West Pakistan in education as well as in many other fields of development, so that shortly before the independence of Bangladesh there was a large disparity in educational development between East and West Pakistan.

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[130] R. Kahane, "Education toward Mediatory Roles", *Development and Change*, Vol. 7, No. 3, 1976, p. 295.

[131] M.S. Huq, *Education and Development Strategy in South and Southeast Asia* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press,1965), p. 38.

3.6 Structure and System of Education

The colonial system of education and the pattern of education administration inherited at the time of partition of the Indian-Subcontinent in 1947 still survives without substantial structural changes. The curriculum remained virtually the same at all levels of education and English is predominantly used as a medium of instruction both in secondary and higher levels. The education system comprises about 50,000 institutions, over a quarter of a million teachers and around 10 million students.[132]

The structure of formal education in Bangladesh, as is illustrated in diagram 2, consists of three distinct levels: primary, secondary and higher education - pre-primary education is not included. There are, however, a goodly number of nurseries and kindergartens located in the urban centres for the children of the wealthy and upper classes.

The basic primary course is of 5 years duration with enrollment starting at the age of 5+. After this comes the secondary level, divided between two types of schools: Junior High Schools (classes VI-VIII) and Senior High Schools (IX-X). After the successful completion of high school (class X) a person is eligible to take the first national level examination, Secondary School Certificate(SSC). There is no diversification up to the Junior Secondary stage. However, at the high school (secondary) level, apart from the two main academic streams, i.e. humanities and science, there is provision in some schools to teach optional courses such as industrial arts, agriculture, commerce and home-economics.

The SSC leads to a two year higher secondary course in separate institutions called Intermediate Colleges and in the intermediate sections of Degree colleges. A few prestigious urban schools also offer Higher Secondary School Certificate courses (HSC) and the HSC examination is taken in class XII. Students with an S.S.C can (assuming the person has had the requisite background course where prescribed) join a Primary Teacher Training institute, which offers a one year course, a Junior Teacher Training College which offers a two year course, a commercial institute (2 years), a Polytechnic Institute(3 years) or the college of Fine Arts (5 years leading to degree).

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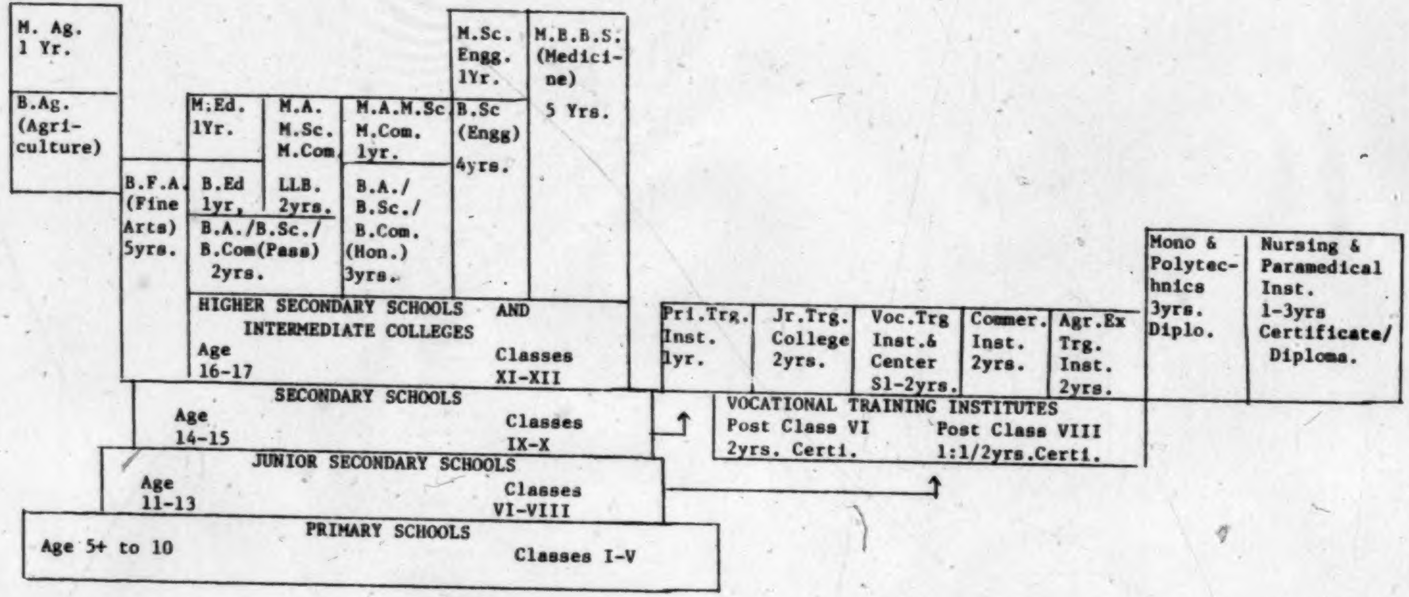
[132] E.Sattar, *Universal Primary Education in Bangladesh* (Dacca:The University Press,1982), p. 13.

Higher education, by its very nature, is a distinct stage. The universities are sanctuaries of graduate and post-graduate studies. Only recently a few selected colleges were allowed to offer graduate level courses.

The education facilities are, in terms of their coverage of the country, neither comprehensive nor offered equally to students of both sexes. The urban areas have a disproportionate share of good educational facilities, while other areas are educationally disadvantaged. Elite schools, both private and government, cater largely to the needs of the urban professional, civil, military and business groups. Knowledge of English remains a prerequisite of success especially at the higher levels and particularly at the universities where most texts used are still in English.

Diagram 3 shows student enrollment at the various levels and indicates the wastage which occurs. Even at the lowest ladder the system fails to enroll all the primary-age children, and there are not enough schools for them even if they were all to enroll. Heavy drop out is increasingly becoming an important problem with the system. Girls are

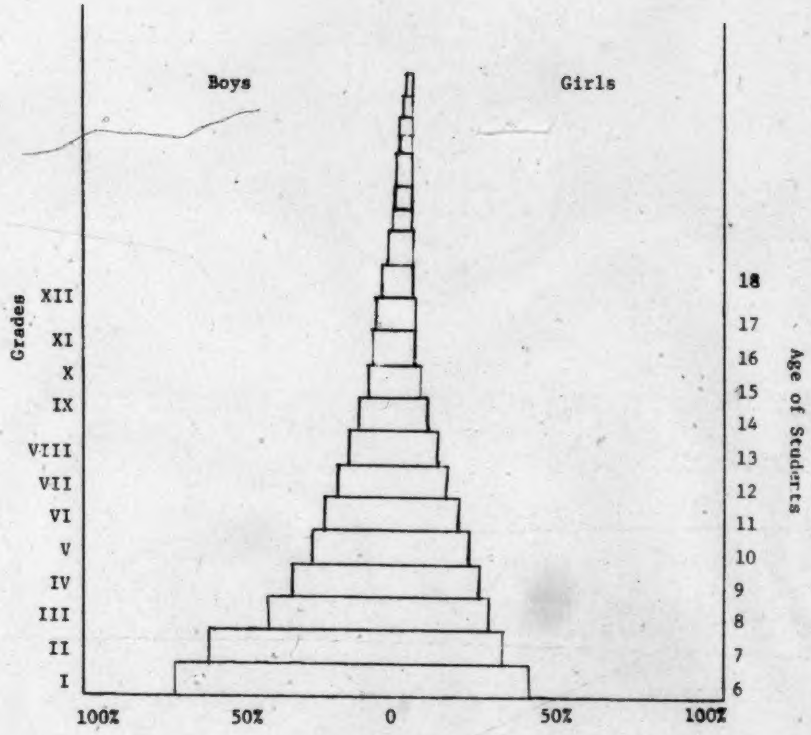
DIAGRAM 2


M. Ag.
1 Yr.
B.Ag.
(Agri-
culture)
B.F.A.
(Fine
Arts)
5yrs.
M.Ed.
1Yr.
B.Ed
1yr,
M.A.
M.Sc.
M.Com.
LLB.
2yrs.
B.A./B.Sc./
B.Com(Pass)
2yrs.
M.A.M.Sc.
M.Com.
1yr.
B.A./
B.Sc./
B.Com.
(Hon.)
3yrs.
M.Sc.
Engg.
1Yr.
B.Sc
(Engg)
4yrs.
M.B.B.S.
(Medici-
ne)
5 Yrs.
HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS AND
INTERMEDIATE COLLEGES
Age
16-17
Classes
XI-XII
SECONDARY SCHOOLS
Age
14-15
Classes
IX-X
JUNIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS
Age
11-13
Classes
VI-VIII
PRIMARY SCHOOLS
Age 5+ to 10
Classes I-V
Pri.Trg.
Inst.
1yr.
Jr.Trg.
College
2yrs.
Voc.Trg
Inst.&
Center
S1-2yrs.
Commer.
Inst.
2yrs.
Agr.Ex
Trg.
Inst.
2yrs.
Mono &
Polytec-
hnics
3yrs.
Diplo.
Nursing &
Paramedical
Inst.
1-3yrs
Certificate/
Diploma.
VOCATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTES
Post Class VI
2yrs. Certi.
Post Class VIII
1:1/2yrs.Certi.

STRUCTURE OF EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM IN BANGLADESH

Source: Husain, A. F. A., *Education, Development and Reform in Bangladesh*, p. 248.

DIAGRAM 3



Enrollment

Educational Pyramid of Bangladesh, 1980.

Source: E. Satter, *Universal Primary Education in Bangladesh*, (Dacca: The University Press, 1982).

disadvantaged throughout; only a small percentage enroll and fewer still continue up to class V. Provision of schools is also unequal at the secondary level. The total enrollment does not give a true picture of the situation since the wastage is high. One important fact that should, however, be noted is that while primary schools are overwhelmingly government institutions (about 84%), education institutions at the secondary and college levels tend to be privately owned.[133] Thus, in Bangladesh more than 98% of the secondary schools are privately run while 94% of intermediate and degree colleges are private institutions.[134] Despite this fact, they receive government grants. The six universities of Bangladesh are autonomous but receive over 85% of their funds from the government. All the technical, vocational and agricultural schools are government ones; the Cadet Colleges, which are very elitist in their nature, are also financed by the government. Although secondary schools are private, they are subject to government rules and inspection. Students take national level examinations which are devised and administered by Divisional Secondary School Boards located at Comilla, Jessore, Rajshahi and Dacca. Colleges are administered by their own Boards of Governors and examinations are held under the various universities to which they are affiliated.

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[133] Satter, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 14.
[134] Hussain, *Reform in Bangladesh*, p. 22.

The state assumes the responsibility of providing free primary education. Fees have to be paid by students at all other levels. Students including those at the primary level also have to buy their their own supplies and books. Therefore, although it seems that primary school is "free" because of the exclusion of the tuition charges, in fact it is not free at all. Since the tuition fee for primary education was not very high as compared to other levels their abolition has made little difference to the poorer families.

One important point which should be mentioned here is that outside the main stream of education described above, other significant types of education are available. Probably the most important of these is religious education which is available at the *Madrashas* of different types which provide an education from the elementary up to the more advanced levels leading to equivalents of the Bachelor's and Master's degrees. Apart from this, a wide range of non-formal education programs are provided by a large number of public and private organizations. These are mainly connected with rural development schemes of the country and the work-oriented training programs which are sponsored by social welfare organizations and agencies.

Finally, it is important to mention that culturally, the British education system contributed to the colonization and domestication of the people of Bangladesh. The prolonged period of colonial rule produced a dependent and servile attitude that educated Bengali even now find impossible to shake off. The educated few who dominate the whole country are completely alienated from the masses. This alienation is not only social but also cultural. In accordance with the logic of unimaginative imitation of the West, these educated local elites still try to follow the models of education current in the economically developed western countries, rather than initiate a relevant, long-awaited system for the oppressed, half-fed illiterate, half-clothed "people" of their country.

Even constitutional independence could not change the attitudes of these elite groups to the masses. Colonial mentality manifests itself in a contemptuous attitude towards things indigenous, and in uncritical exaltation of whatever is foreign. Instead of liberating the peoples' minds and developing the country, western formal schooling contributed to educational underdevelopment and dependency. Carnoy rightly summarized this point:

> ...educators, social scientists and historians have misinterpreted the role of Western schooling in the Third World and in the industrialized countries themselves. ...far from acting as a liberator, Western formal education came to most countries as part of imperialist domination. It was consistent with the goals of imperialism: the economic and political control of the people of one country by the dominant class in another. The imperial powers attempted through schooling, to train the colonized for roles that suited the colonizer.[135]

The educational underdevelopment of Bangladesh began as the creation of colonial rule - it was the outcome of the relationship with imperialist power. Imperialism supported a particular class structure in which the availability of education was restricted to people who occupied privileged positions in the "Centre" of the satellite economies. The structure created by the colonialists still persists and is strongly supported by the present elites. As long as this structure of society prevails, the country cannot overcome its educational underdevelopment.

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[135] Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*, p. 3.

4. EDUCATION DURING THE PAKISTAN PERIOD

As indicated in the previous chapter, the basic structure of the society of Bangladesh had changed very little even after partition in 1947. The national bourgeosie who took over the political power followed passionately in the footsteps of British colonial power. In fact, they simply acquired the "legal right" to discriminate and create an unequal society. The elites of Pakistan maintained the inherited educational structure largely as a means of reproducing their own position. The union of Bangladesh (East Pakistan)[136] with West Pakistan was an unhappy one politically, economically and culturally. The political ascendency of West Pakistan, in fact, began another colonial era which lasted until 1971. The concentration of power in the hands of West Pakistan made it easy to discrimnate and exploit East Pakistan in every respect without international condemnation.

The widely different social and economic conditions between East and West Pakistan, the constant political instability largely because of the suspension of democratic processes almost from the inception of Pakistan, the disproportionate balance of power between the two wings of the country and the centralization of decision making in the

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[136] During the time of union with Pakistan, Bangladesh was called East Pakistan, East Bengal or East Wing (region or part) of Pakistan. Therefore, in this thesis any of these names refers to Bangladesh.

West all had adverse effects on both overall development objectives and the education system of Bangladesh. The disparities were even obvious in the resource allocations of the Development Plans. In the first two Plans, the funds allocated to West Pakistan were much greater even though it had a smaller population than the East Pakistan. The Central Government justified this discrimination on the grounds of lower absorptive capacity of the latter for capital. To East Bengal it was evidence of unequal bargaining power between the two wings. It was not before the Third Five Year Plan (1965-70) that the East wing of the country was given a slight edge over the West wing in public sector allocations, when it was allocated 51% of the total development expenditure on education.[137] Nevertheless, as in the earlier Plans, shortfalls in implementation were much greater in East than in West Pakistan. Therefore, in effect, the East Wing did not receive a greater proportion of the national developmental resources for education as had been planned. However, whatever resources were allocated for education in the East Wing, the portion for primary education was nominal. Indeed primary education in Pakistan as a whole received very little attention in these Developmental Plans.

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[137] Government of Pakistan, *The Third Five Year Plan 1965-1970* (Karachi: The Manager of Publications, 1965), p. 214.

4.1 Socio-Economic and Political Disparities between Bangladesh and Pakistan

Since the emergence of Pakistan as a nation, the financial resources of East Pakistan were diverted to the development of West Pakistan. The economic policy in Pakistan had been concerned primarily with accelerating the rate at which its gross national product was increasing. This objective had been pursued with strong determination and other possible social goals had been neglected. In fact, this single-minded pursuit of economic growth had resulted not only in failure to increase welfare but in some ways had also led to an actual deterioration of the well-being of the majority of the population. Although production expanded rapidly, little real development occurred.

The developmental strategies that were followed by the Government had changed the economic structure considerably. In 1949 agriculture accounted for nearly 60% of G. D. P.; by the end of 1960's it accounted for slightly more than 45%. Industrial output had doubled between these years and accounted for about a quarter of G. D. P. for the same period of time. However, there was no dramatic change in the employment structure of the country as was the case in the pattern of production. Between 1951 and 1961 (two census years), the percentage of the labor force employed in agriculture declined only fractionally, i. e., from 76.5% to 74.3%, though a more rapid decline, i. e., to 67.1% in

1966-67 was revealed by sample survey estimates.[138] Table 4:1 indicates the composition of output in Pakistan and its two wings and Table 4:2 shows the composition of employment for the same country.

Table 4:1

Composition of Output in Pakistan and its Two Wings.

	1949-50	1959-60	1969-70
Pakistan			
Agriculture	59.9	53.2	45.3
Industry	12.0	17.5	24.0
Services	28.1	29.3	30.7
East Pakistan			
Agriculture	65.2	63.5	55.7
Industry	9.4	13.7	20.2
Services	25.4	22.8	24.1
West Pakistan			
Agriculture	54.5	49.1	41.6
Industry	14.7	20.7	28.3
Services	30.8	30.2	30.1

Note: 1. Industry consisted of manufacturing, mining, construction and transport. 2. Estimates of regional products which formed the basis of these shares did not add up to national product because some small transport and services items of national product were not distributed between the regions.

Source:For 1949-50, Khan and Bergan, "Measurement of Structural Change in the Pakistan Economy", in *The Pakistan Development Review*, summer 1966. For 1959-60, C. S. O., *Final Report of the National Income Commission*, Karachi, 1966. For 1969-70, C. S. O., *Draft Minutes of the Fifth Meeting of the National Accounts Committee*, mimeographed, Karachi, 1970. In Griffin and Khan, *Growth and Inequality*, p. 4.

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[138] However, the differences between the census and survey methods and the definitions used have to be allowed for before drawing any firm conclusion. See K. Griffin and A. R. Khan, *Growth and Inequality in Pakistan* (London:Macmillan Press Ltd., 1972), pp. 3-4.

Table 4:2

Composition of Employment in Pakistan and its Two Wings.

	1951	1961	1966-67
Pakistan			
Agriculture	76.5	74.3	67.1
Industry	8.7	12.0	16.5
Services	14.8	13.7	16.4
East Pakistan			
Agriculture	84.7	85.3	77.8
Industry	6.6	6.0	9.6
Services	8.7	8.7	12.6
West Pakistan			
Agriculture	65.3	59.3	53.4
Industry	11.6	20.2	25.4
Services	23.1	20.5	21.2

Source: 1951 and 1961 estimates are based on Population Censuses of the respective years. 1966-67 estimates from C. S. O., *Summary Report of Population and Labour Force in Pakistan (Labour Force Sample Survey)*, in Griffin and Khan, *Growth and Inequality*, p. 4.

These national averages conceal important regional differences. The rate of industrialization had been much lower for East than for West Pakistan. If the share of industrial employment in the total labor force is used as an index, then East Pakistan failed to industrialize during the period between 1951-61, while West Pakistan achieved a significant rate of industrialization during the same period. Also, the percentage of the labor force employed in agriculture increased from 84.7 to 85.3 between 1951 and 1961 .in the East and decreased from 65.3 to 59.3 in the West. Similarly, the proportion of the labor force employed in industry declined by 0.6 points in East (to 6%) and rose by 8.6 points in West Pakistan to 20.2%.[139]

The uneven rates of industrialization were accompanied by uneven rates of growth of the two wings, which led to an increasing disparity between the average standard of living in the two wings. In 1949-50, West Pakistan's per capita income was 17% higher than that of East Pakistan. By 1959-60 the gap widened to 32% and by 1969-70 to 60%. Griffin and Khan argued that even these rates of disparity would appear to understate the real differential between regional standards of living, if one considered, first, the considerably lower purchasing power of a unit of income in the East as compared with that in the West and, second, the evidence of a relative overstatement of various components of the East's G. D. P. in the national income estimates.

The massive disparities between the two regions and between urban and rural areas were the direct consequences of the government's growth strategy. The strategy consisted essentially of two elements. First, growth was to occur mainly through industrialization. Second, growth was to be financed in part by foreign aid and in part by redistributing income to the capitalist class, who were assumed to have a high tendency to save. Taxation and public savings were also kept low so as to provide strong incentives to private entrepreneurs.[140]

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[139] Ibid.

The industrialization strategy that Pakistan followed increased the disparities in income distribution between poor and rich and between the two regions of the country. The main reasons for these were: first, the over-emphasis on industrialization implied a relative misallocation of resources in favor of industry and against agriculture beyond the limits of comparative advantage; second, the arbitrary trade controls distorted the price structure to such an extent as to make intra-industrial priorities unrecognizable. Within the industrial sector, resources were allocated to the wrong sectors of the economy and to the wrong techniques of production; third, most of the new industries were technically inefficient and the period required for these industries to mature seemed to have been quite long. In short, Pakistan had been neglecting agriculture relative to industry and had been producing the wrong industrial goods in the wrong way and, furthermore, had been doing that inefficiently.[141]

The method used to finance industrialization also had adverse effects. The process of redistributing resources from agriculture to industry was unfair, and in fact was imperialistic. It was accompanied by, and more correctly was an integral part of, a redistribution of income from the poor to the rich and from East to West Pakistan. Of course, in Pakistan a transfer of resources from agriculture to industry implied a transfer from the East to the West Wing,[142] since more than 60% of East Pakistan's gross output originated in agriculture as compared to 40% in West Pakistan. It had been estimated by a group of economists from East Pakistan that the total transfer of resources over the two decades after independence up to 1968-69 would amount to Rs. 31,120 million, or over $100 per head of East Pakistan's population.[143]

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[140] Keith Griffin and A. R. Khan, *Growth and Inequality*, p. 25.

[141] See for detailed discussion on these points Part 3, ibid.

The transfer of resources worked through the instrument of the balance of payments. Until 1962-63 East Pakistan had a surplus on its external balance of trade and although it imported more goods from West Pakistan than it exported to it, it often had an overall export surplus which was diverted to benefit the West Wing. On the other hand, West Pakistan had an overall deficit on foreign account which was partly financed by East Pakistan's export surplus and partly through aid. Until the end of 1950's when the East Wing had an overall surplus on her foreign and domestic balance of payments, the West Wing not only effectively secured all the aid[144]

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[142] Because most of the industrial development was occuring in West Pakistan.

[143] Government of Pakistan, Planning Commission, *Report of The Panel of Economists on The Fourth Five Year Plan (1970-75)*, May 1970, p. 75, in Griffin and Khan, *Growth and Inequality*, p. 29.

[144] It should be noted that out of the total amount of foreign developmental aid received during 1947-48 to 1960-61, East Pakistan's share was about 17% as against 62% for West Pakistan. See East Pakistan, Planning Department, *Economic Disparities Between East and West Pakistan* (Dacca:

[144] but also used resources from the East. Subsequently, when the East Wing's total trade moved into deficit, the transfer of resources was reduced, but the East Wing continued to be deprived.[145]

The evidence of the neglect of East Pakistan can also be seen from the division of development expenditure between the two wings. East Pakistan received only 20% of public and private development expenditure in the first half of the 1950s but throughout the years the proportion rose steadily. However, by the last half of the 1960s the province was still receiving only 36% of total development funds. The comparision is even worse if one considered the size of the population between the two wings.[146] In the period between 1950-51 and 1954-55 development expenditure per head was almost 4.9 times higher in West Pakistan than in East Pakistan. By 1965-66 and 1969-70, however, the situation improved relatively but West Pakistan was still receiving 2.17 times as much as East Pakistan.[147]

To aggravate the situation even more, much of the development efforts carried out in the private industrial sector in Bangladesh were undertaken by West Pakistani businessmen. Earnings by this group in Bangladesh were reinvested in the West and the proceeds from the export of jute and jute manufactures diverted to the development of that wing.

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[144] (cont'd)East Pakistan Government Press, 1963), p. 21. According to Abul Mansur Ahmed, East Wing received only 8.61% of the total amount of foreign aid received during 1947-48 to 1954-55, see Pakistan, *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, I. 51 (January 16, 1956), pp. 1846-47.

[145] J. Faaland and J. R. Parkinson, *Bangladesh: The Test Case of Development* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 1976), pp. 6-10.

[146] 55% of the nation's population concentrated in East Pakistan.

[147] Ibid., however, it was not more than 30% over the period as a whole, see Griffin and Khan, *Growth and Inequality*, p. 5.

The development process in East Bengal enriched West Pakistanis and this gave rise to considerable resentment among Bengalis. Faaland and Parkinson observed how the investment of the West Pakistanis in the East affected the development process:

> In a modern economy an influx of foreign capital may be welcomed together with the expertise that it brings. The rewards to capital may be low compared with the wages paid out in respect of the employment created. But in a poor underdeveloped country the share of wages is often much smaller than in countries with a large supply of capital, and in conditions of near monopoly and protection, much of the advantage of development may go to capitalists and with it the opportunity further to expand to their empire by reinvestment, or to salt capital away abroad.[148]

Therefore, after almost a quarter-century of independence and the completion of three five-year plans the Government of Pakistan had failed to reduce the disparities between the two wings of the country. Indeed, the disparity was growing, although its rate of increase might have been slowing down a bit.

The bitter resentment which this economic exploitation created among Bengalis resulted in a demand by the East Wing for a radical reallocation of economic resources and for full provincial autonomy. The exploitation was possible because of the integrated nature of the economic system. The Central Government operated overall economic control, and the provincial Governments had very little say in the formation of the rational economic policy; there was, in fact, no room for independent action by the East Pakistan Government.[149] Pakistan's fourth five-year-plan (1970-75) identified the imbalances and disparities that had emerged over the past 20 years. The Plan expressed concern over the rise in prices, decline in real wages, increase in landless labor and accentuation of inequalities in income, indicating that luxury consumption highlighted the gulf between the abject poverty of the "have-nots" and the ostentatious living of the "haves". It was recognised by the Plan that the inevitable consequences were the sharpening of the conflict between economic growth and social justice and unprecedented political upheavals caused by the social and economic confrontations.[150]

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[148] Faaland and Parkinson, *Bangladesh*, p. 9.

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[149] It should be noted that a strong central Government composed mainly of West Pakistanis, who exercised all the political power to develop their own region and strengthen their hold on the rest of the country. Provincial autonomy was considered as disruptive of the integrity and stability of the country (in other words it was disruptive to their position and privilege). The establishment of a highly autocratic, centralized system of Government made it easy to deprive the East Pakistanis. The system aroused antagonism and deep-seated suspicions of the people of East Bengal, which ultimately resulted in breaking away from West Pakistan.

[150] Government of Pakistan, Planning Commission, *The Fourth Five Year Plan - 1970-75* (Islamabad, 1970), pp. 11-13.

The ruling class of Pakistan did not pay much attention to the grievances of Bengalis, but instead attempted to explain away disparities in terms of historical and economic factors. The policy of the ruling class contributed to political instability rather than unity. It transformed the relations between the two Wings of Pakistan into those of a metropolitan power and a satellite. The East Wing became the market for protected industries located in West Pakistan.

It was felt by the Bengalis that their economic stagnation was caused by their insignificant representation in government services, an imbalance which was mainly due to historical factors. During British rule, the Muslims of Bengal, like those of other Muslim majority provinces except the Punjab, had an insignificant representation in government services. However, it was expected that after independence the government job recruitment policy would quickly restore the balance. But this did not happen. Faced with increasing criticism, the Central Government introduced a quota system for the two wings. In 1950, the policy formulated was that 20% of the officers were to be recruited on merit and the remaining 80% were to be shared equally between East and West Pakistan. However, later it was revealed that the fixed ratio for recruitment was not maintained on the ground that suitable candidates were not available from East Bengal.[151] Therefore, in 1948, only a 7% share of the civil service jobs (202 out of a total of 2,862) was provided for East Pakistan. The figure rose to about 14% by 1955.[152] Nevertheless, the increase occurred only at the lower level of the service cadre, at the highest level of the service, the East Wing had little or no representation.

The same kinds of disparities can be observed in recruitment to the armed forces. In 1955, the Bengalis comprised 13 out of 909 officers in the Army. Among them, one was a Major General, two were Lieutentant Colonels and 10 were Majors.[153]

West Pakistan also tried to dominate the Bengalis culturally. With the achievement of independence in 1947, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the father of the nation, declared that Urdu should be the national language. This created strong opposition among Bengalis who considered it unjust to impose Urdu on the Bengali speaking majority of the country against their will. The Bengalis considered this intolerable and started a movement for the recognition of Bengali as one of the state languages - a movement, which reached its peak on February 21, 1952 when the movement had its first martyrs. In 1956, the constitution of Pakistan eventually recognized

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[151] Pakistan, *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan Debates*, I, 7 (March 21, 1950), p. 258; Vol. 1, No. 10, (March 25, 1950), p. 361.

[152] Pakistan, *National Assembly of Pakistan Debate*, I, 1 (October 8, 1956), p. 63.

[153] Pakistan, *Constituent Assembly of Pakistan, Debates*, I, 52 (January 17, 1956), p. 1845.

Bengali as one of the national languages.[154] But it left always a bitter feeling among Bengalis towards West Pakistanis because of the price they had to pay to secure their mother tongue which should have been theirs without any argument.[155]

4.2 Education in Pakistan From 1947 to 1970

The foregoing discussion reveals the wide range of disparities between the two wings of Pakistan[156] - a factor which was reflected in the field of education. However, it should be noted that despite the repeated proclamation about the importance of education and human resource development, little had been done to improve the educational system of the country. Public expenditure on education and the place of education in the national developmental plans were virtually unrecognizable. In 1959-60, only 1.2% of the national income was spent on education, while the actual amount spent per head of population was $0.6.[157] These figures were about the lowest in the world.[158] The First Five Year Plan (1955-60) allocated only 6.2% of development funds to education, and only 58%[159] of this amount was spent. In the Second Plan, the percentage was cut down to 4%. This shows that investment in education was far from commensurate with the goals set for it.

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[154] But it was already announced that the English language was to continue to be used for all official purposes.

[155] Keith Callard, *Pakistan: A Political Study* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1957), p. 183.

[156] The country was geographically separated for more than a thousand miles. It was united on the basis of religious belief of the majority of the people of the two parts of the country. Except the religion - Islam, there were no similarities between these two parts.

[157] Unesco, *Basic Facts and Figures*, 1962, cited in M. Rashid, "Allocation to the Education Sector in the Third Five Year Plan" in A. I. Qureshi, *the Third Five Year Plan and Other Papers* (Lahor: The Pakistan Economic Association and Ferozsons Ltd., 1965), p. 155.

Yet the importance of education was highly emphasised by the national leaders of Pakistan. As early as 1947, shortly after Pakistan's independence, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, at a conference, expressed the nation's educational goals:

> The importance of education and the right type of education, cannot be over-emphsized. Under foreign rule for over a century, sufficient attention has not been paid to the education of our people and if we are to make a real, speedy and substantial progress we must earnestly tackle this question and bring our educational policy and programme on the lines suited to the genius of our people, consonant with our history and culture and having regard to the modern conditions and vast developments that have taken place all over the world... . There is no doubt that the future of our State will and must depend on the type of education we give to our children and the way in which we bring them up as the future citizens of Pakistan. Education does not merely mean academic education. There is immediate and urgent need for giving scientific and technical

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[158] On the other hand, investment on the armed forces was tremendous. The percentage of resources invested on defense out of total government expenditure was 65.17% for 1947-48. In 1970-71, it was 53.32%. However, the average for this period was more than 55%. See Government of Pakistan, Central Statistical Office, Economic Affairs Division, *25 Years of Pakistan in Statistics 1947-72* (Karachi: Manager of Publications, 1972), p. 173. It should be noted that in all the Third World countries this was the trend irrespective of their form of government. Many countries invested over 50% of the national budget on the armed forces. See S. M. Huq, *Education, Manpower, and Development in South and Southeast Asia* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1975), p. 44.

[159] A. Curle, *Educational Problems of Developing Societies*, p. 105.

> education to our people in order to build up our future economic life and to see that our people take to science, commerce, trade and, particularly, well-planned industries. We should not forget that we have to compete with the world which is moving very fast in this direction. At the same time we have to build up the character of our future generation. We should try, by sound education, to instill into them the highest sense of honour, integrity, responsibility and selfless service to the nation. We have to see that they are fully qualified and equipped to play their part in the various branches of national life in a manner which will do honour to Pakistan.[160]

This conference made three major recommendations: First, education should be inspired by Islam and particularly by the ideals of universal brotherhood, tolerance and justice; Second, free and compulsory education should be introduced; Third, technical education should be recognized. The conference also suggested that several studies be undertaken, including an analysis of scientific research and technical education, a critical review of the examination system and the collection of statistical data by the provinces. According to the recommendation of the Conference, a number of advisory and other bodies were established and the activities of these and other bodies led to the formulation of a Six-Year National Plan for Educational Development in 1952.[161] It was an *ad hoc* though useful exercise which could not serve as a concrete plan of action, as it was not related to any overall plan of social and economic development.

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[160] Quoted in Pakistan, *The First Five Year Plan*, p. 542, Also in A. Curle, *Planning for Education In Pakistan* (Cambridge, Mass., Harvard U. P.,1966), pp. 49-50.

[161] Ibid., pp. 542-43.

However, despite the lofty pronouncements of national leaders about the overwhelming importance of education for overall development, education was a neglected sector in Pakistan as was seen from the percentage of the development funds allocated to it. Moreover, the national plans emphasised the importance of education and human resource development. It was noted in the plans that:

> A programme for the improvement and expansion of education is a vital part of the national development Plan. Not only is it necessary to enlarge rapidly the number of trained persons in the country in order to carry out the various development schemes and to provide the specialized and technical services needed to conduct the activities of a progressive nation, but also the provision of educational opportunities is one of the primary goals of a society believing in equality of opportunity and the paramount worth of the individual.[162]
>
> Economic growth is dependent on effective use of the human and material resources of the nation... Of the two fundamental forms of wealth the human resources are clearly more important... . It is through the efficient application of human energy that social capital is created... . A comprehensive approach to the training and use of human resources lies at the heart of planning.[163]
>
> Education at all levels is to be expanded and advanced as fast as the required institutions and personnel can be provided.[164]
>
> Education...has come to be seen as an essential prerequisite in the process of development. Countries that have made rapid economic and social progress are significantly those that have devoted a great deal of attention to education, training and research.[165]
>
> The development of manpower resources will be viewed as an investment in human capital ultimately aiming at faster economic growth.[166]

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[162] Pakistan, *The First Plan*, p. 539.
[163] Pakistan, *The Second Five Year Plan (1960-65)*, p. 329.
[164] Ibid., p. XIV.
[165] Pakistan, *The Fourth Five Year Plan (1970-75)*, , p. 143.
[166] Ibid., p. 105.

However, in spite of the professed commitment the situation did not change in any significant way up to the time Pakistan broke up. Elitism, though much denounced as a colonial legacy, had continued to characterize the expanding educational system, with the socially and economically disadvantaged having a negligible share in its benefits.[167]

In line with traditional British policy, the ruling elite of Pakistan paid little attention to the education of the masses. The elitist nature continued and mass education was neglected. In the Developmental Plans priority went to industrial and infra-structural development. The Government did not want to educate the masses, because they were needed as cheap labor for industrial development of West Pakistan. While the Government acknowledged the importance of primary education and indicated an urgency in the universalization of primary education, little had been done to achieve the goal. The budgetary allocation to education was, as was indicated above, meagre and did not show that the ruling class intended to translate their rhetoric into reality. Whatever resources were alloted to education went mainly to expand the secondary and higher levels of education at the cost of the primary level.

Therefore, the educational development since the independence of Pakistan was very steady, especially at the primary level. Although the public expenditure for the year 1954-55 was two and a half times as high as for 1948-49, the enrollment in the primary schools increased by about 25%. At the secondary level expenditures were doubled, with enrollment increasing more than 25% and the number of teachers rising from 17.500 to 22.500. However, it was at the tertiary level that the most striking expansion took place. Three new universities were established in addition to the three already in existence. The government expenditure on this level increased more than three times - Rs. 61 lakhs to Rs. 2.7 crores.[168] At the same time a very modest start was made with technical education too.[169] However, changes since independence were quantitative rather than qualitative.

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[167] S. M. Huq, *Education, Manpower, and Development*, p. 9.

Systematic work on educational development started with the First Five-Year Plan of Pakistan after the Planning Board had been set up in 1953. Between 1955 and 1970 three five-year plans had been prepared and launched. A Fourth Five Year Plan for Pakistan was prepared in 1970 by a military regime, assisted by professionals and administrators in the shadow of impending political crisis. There was no popular participation in its formulation and it had practically no backing from political leaders who were at the time contesting the elections. The Plan had hardly got off the ground when the country was plunged in civil strife culminating in the independence of Bangladesh towards the end of 1971.

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[168] 1 lakh=100,000 and 1 crore=10 million.
[169] Pakistan, *The First Plan*, pp. 539-40.

4.3 Educational Planning and the Place of Primary Education Within it

The Pakistan Education Conference of 1947 first resolved that "free and compulsory education should be introduced for a period of five years".[170] Since that time UPE was a major goal of the nation and its planning machinery. The First Five Year Plan asserted that a system of universal primary education was imperative. It was viewed as "essential to prepare citizens for the discharge of their democratic and civic responsibilities and to provide them with equal opportunities for economic and cultural advancement".[171] The Plan made a number of excellent recommendations to achieve the goal of universal primary education. Emphasis on the enrollment of girls was to be the key focus in the efforts to achieve UPE. It was recognized that primary schools should be thrown open to girls wherever possible, and new schools constructed for them. It was also considered that by the better distribution of primary schools, the existing inequalities in primary education would be reduced.[172] However, the stated allocation of resources in the First Plan of Pakistan in Table 4:3 seems inconsistent with the proposed objectives. Primary education was neglected while secondary and higher levels of education received a considerable allocation of resources. As a result, no marked improvements in the quality of primary education occurred. Primary school enrollment did not increase to the extent expected, but secondary school enrollment was appreciably higher. At the secondary level, the training of teachers to meet the expanding requirements was satisfactory, although no increase was registered at the primary level. Higher education and technical education at the higher levels were given a high priority. Therefore, the enrollment in the colleges and universities was doubled during this period.[173]

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[170] Pakistan, *The First Plan*, p. 545.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid., pp. 546-548

In 1958, the Government of Pakistan appointed the Commission on National Education, which made a comprehensive report in 1959, covering a wide range of subjects. The main theme of the report was that education should be viewed as a productive activity, as an investment in human resources, essential for the development of a progressive and prosperous welfare state. Among other recommendations of the Commission was the introduction of UPE for the age group 6-11 by 1970 and for the age group 11-14 by 1975.[174] Although the Government expressed interest in implementing a major part of the recommendations of the Commission on Education, this was not adequately reflected in the financial allocations made and still less in the actual implementations of the Plans. While primary education received 24% of the allocation in the Second Plan and 20% in the Third, the estimated actual expenditure at this level

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[173] Pakistan, *The Second Plan*, pp. 338-39.

[174] However, it should be noted that in the Third Plan (1965-70), 1980 was adopted as a more realistic target date.

Table 4:3

Proposed Allocation for Education, Public Sector, First Five Year Plan (1955-60)

	Millions of Rupees	Percentage
Primary Education	104.52	18.0
Secondary Eduacation	154.92	26.7
Teacher Education	38.20	6.6
Colleges and Universities	170.90	29.4
Technical Education	50.55	8.7
Scholarships	5.50	.9
Scientific and Industrial Research	28.30	4.9
Labor Training Schemes	17.86	3.1
Miscellaneous	9.95	1.7
Total	580.70	100.0

Source: Pakistan, *The First Plan*, p. 590.

during the Second Plan was only 9%. This may be compared with an estimated actual expenditure of 17% for secondary and 25% (as against an allocation of 14%) for higher education in the Second Plan. In the Third Plan 23% of the resources were allocated to secondary education and 15% for higher education. Allocation for technical education went up very substantially. It was 24% in the Second Plan and 23% in the Third Plan (it was 6% in the First Plan). Table 4:4 indicates the priorities assigned to various levels of education during the Second and Third Plans.

The budgetary situation of primary education for East Bengal was more or less the same. In the Second and Third Plans, primary education was allocated 18% and 20% respectively of the total expenditure. The allocation for

Table 4:4

Comparison of Relative Allocation Made to Various Levels of Education During Second and Third Plans in Pakistan.
(Percentage)

Subsection	Second Plan (estimated actual)	Third Plan Allocation
Primary Education	9.0%	20.0%
Secondary Education	17.0	23.0
Teacher Education	6.0	5.0
Technical Education	24.0	23.0
Higher Education	25.0	15.0
Scholarships	8.0	8.0
Miscellaneous	11.0	6.0
	100.0	100.0

Source: Pakistan, *The Third Plan*, p. 215.

secondary education increased from 19.9% in the Second Plan to 21.0% in the Third Plan. Allocation for higher education fell slightly from 21.5% in the Second to 16.2% in the Third Plan, which was still very high considering the number of students involved.[175] The allocation for technical education went up from 19.7% in the Second to 28.8% in the Third Plan, but much of it was spent on higher and diploma level of technical education to the neglect of lower levels of technical education. Table 4:5 shows allocation in different levels of education during the Second, and the Third Plans for Bangladesh.

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[175] It should be, however, realized that there were always discrepancies between allocation and actual expenditure (which always favored higher levels of education to the neglect of primary education).

Table 4:5

Public Sector Development Allocations for Education and Training in Bangladesh during the First, Second and Third Five-Year Plans of Pakistan.(in Percentage)

Level	First Plan (1955-60)	Second Plan (1960-65)	Thilrd Plan (1965-70)
Primary Education	21.40	18.01	20.20
Secondary	35.21	19.91	21.00
Higher	29.14	21.45	16.23
Teacher Ed.	6.15	7.79	3.63
Technical Ed.	5.90	19.17	28.84
Madrasah Ed.	-	-	1.13
Scholarship	-	7.72	5.33
Social and Cultural activities (including libraries)	1.20	2.94	0.73
Special	1.00	2.47	2.91
	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Planing Commission (unpublished material) in A. F. Husain, *Educational Reform in Bangladesh*, p. 264.

The large amount of allocation for secondary and higher levels of education may be said to indicate an elitist approach to education. In fact, in the Second Plan, proposals were made to continue the provision of a highly exclusive education by the setting up of what would be in effect British-type public schools. The elitist view of education was expressed clearly when it was proposed to set up:

> two well-staffed, fully equipped schools, one in each Province, on the pattern of the best residential schools in other countries. They offer an educational programme of the highest standard and will concentrate on character development and

> leadership training through an active and well disciplined corporate life.[176]

The tendency in an unequal elitist society is to neglect primary education and favor secondary and especially tertiary education through which a relatively small number acquire the "learning" and "culture" to dominate and exploit the masses. Pakistan had almost the lowest literacy rate (18.8%) in 1968 as compared with 67.7% in Burma (1968), 42.9% in Indonesia (1969), 75.1% in Sri Lanka (1968), 71.9% in the Phillipines (1969) and 67.7% in Thailand (1969).[177] It was significant that Pakistan, while having almost the lowest literacy and primary enrollment rates, was nearly half-way up the scale in post-primary enrollment, and even higher for the enrollment of degree students.[178] Increase of enrollment in the primary schools fell far short of the targets and there was no chance at all that the aim of universalizing primary education would be attained by 1975, not to speak of by 1970 as recommended by the Education Commission.

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[176] Quoted in Curle, *Planning for Education*, p. 69.

[177] Huq, *Education Manpower and Development*, p. 147.

[178] The higher level of education always had a very large portion of the actual development plan allocated to it. As Curle noted that the development plan proper consisted of capital expenditure to be met with resources from the Central Government; recurrent costs,(which were equal to about 40% of capital costs), which were met out of the revenues of the provinces. The recurrent costs involved in a program of primary expansion were considerable and the capital costs relatively light. In the higher levels of education it was different (especially at the university level). Capital expenditure on the four existing universities and the six proposed new ones amounted to 16% of all expenditure on educational development. However, in 1960 university students constituted 0.1% percent of the total student population. This seems discriminatory. See Curle, *Planning for Education*, pp. 56-57. this reveals the underlying attitudes toward different levels of education among the number of key persons who were responsible for implementing policy.

The question as to why universalization of primary education in Bangladesh was not achieved by the target date will not be clear if we do not discuss the discrepancies in educational development and resource allocation in the two wings of Pakistan. There were social, political and economical disparities between East and West Pakistan as indicated previously, and the education sector also could not escape from this pattern. East Pakistan, being a deprived province, was not able to contribute to education (like the other sectors) as much of its revenue as West Pakistan. For instance, in 1962-63, recurrent expenditure on education was only about one-third of that of West Pakistan. East Pakistan's share of the allocation for education in the First and Second plans was 45% and 47% respectively (the remainder included the proposed allocations for expenditure in the Karachi federal area, West Pakistan), but its actual expenditure for the First Plan period and the early three years of the Second was only 35% of the total allocated for the first two plans.[179] This failure to expend the allocation was in part due to a shortage of revenue - a factor which was responsible for one of the most serious handicaps of the educational system - the low pay of teachers. In 1950s, the average salary of a primary school teacher was Rs.22 ($4.60) per month. By 1963, it had increased to about Rs. 60 ($12), but even this increase was not sufficient to attract very competent people into the profession, especially since the starting salary for an untrained teacher was only Rs. 32.5 ($6.80), with an annual increase of Rs. 1 (or $0.21) per month. In contrast to East Pakistan, starting salaries in West Pakistan were three times as high, and average salaries about double of those in East Pakistan. Therefore, in West Pakistan, incentives to become a teacher were more adequate.[180]

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[179] Derived from estimates of the Ministry of Education, cited in Ibid., p. 75.

At the time of partition, East Bengal had a more educated population than West Pakistan - with a much higher rate of literacy and of primary school enrollment. The 1961 census showed that East Pakistan had an adult literacy rate of 21.54% as compared with 16.3% in West Pakistan and a primary enrollment of 3.3 million or 37% for East as compared with 1.7 million or 24% for West Pakistan.[181] However, in all the other levels of education, West Pakistan was in the lead. In fact, even at the primary level, it was rapidly catching up with East Pakistan. Since partition, there had been only about 30% increase in enrollment in East

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[180] East Bengal a matriculate without training earned from Rs. 35.5 to Rs.50.5 (about $7-$10) per month, and after training he was paid Rs. 45.5 to Rs. 65.5 (about $9-$13). However, evidence showed that most of the time untrained matriculate teachers hesitated to go for training because of the low stipend offered during the training period. See ibid., pp. 75-76.

[181] At the time of partition the disparity was even greater, for there were only about half a million children in primary schools in West as compared with 2.5 million in East Pakistan. See Curle, *Educational Problems*, pp. 108-109.

Pakistan; while in West Pakistan it had been 300%.[182] In East Pakistan the number of schools had diminished; while in West Pakistan the number increased more than three times.[183] Furthermore, the total enrollment figures were in fact misleading. The majority of the children of East Pakistan reached no further than class I. For every 100 who enrolled in class I only 40 reached class II and only about 15 reached class V. This indicates that only a small proportion received the total four or five years of schooling which was considered essential for implanting lasting literacy. On the other hand, in West Pakistan, although enrollment at the early stage was only about two-fifths that of East Pakistan, the number of children in class V was in fact slightly higher.[184]

At the higher levels of education West Pakistan was more advanced both in proportionate and numerical terms than East Bengal as tables 4:6 and 4:7 show.

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[182] Curle, *Planning for Education*, p. 76.

[183] The first two Plans stress emphasis on expanding primary schools in West Pakistan. It was noted that 18,000 schools were inadequate for its needs. At the same time, it was indicated that in East Pakistan about 26,300 primary schools were enough to meet the need of the province. Consequently, virtually nothing had been done to expand or improve the situation of primary education in East Pakistan. Therefore, gradually East Pakistan lagged behind West Pakistan at the primary level too. See Pakistan, *the Second Plan*, p. 341.

[184] However, it should be noted that for every 100 children in class I only 38 reach class V. This is also a disappointing rate of retention. See Curle, *Planning for Education*, p. 77.

Table 4:6

Percentage Distribution of Literates by Educational Level, 1961.*

Levels	East Pakistan	West Pakistan
Primary School (Classes I to V)	63.5	47.1
Secondary School (Classes VI to X)	16.9	29.9
Matriculation	2.8	9.0
Intermediate	0.6	1.9
Graduate (Bachelor)	0.4	0.5

Source: Population Census of Pakistan, 1961, Census Bulletin No. 4, *Literacy and Education* (Karachi, 1962), p. xviii. in Curle, *Planning for Education*, p. 77.
*Less than 16% of the literates in Bangladesh, and less than 12% in West Pakistan, had no formal schooling.

Table 4:7

Percentage Variation in Number of Matriculates, Graduates* and Postgraduates between 1951 and 1961.

Regions	Matriculates	Graduate	Postgraduate
Bangladesh	6.3	-32.3	-12.0
West Pakistan	143.7	21.3	68.6

Source: Population Census of Pakistan, 1961, Census Bulletin No. 4, *Literacy and Education* (Karachi, 1962), p. xx. in Curle, *Planning for Education*, p. 78.
*In Bangladesh a graduate is one who holds a Bachelor Degree and postgraduate means "Graduate and postgraduate" level in North American terms.

Table 4:8

School Enrollments Between 1948-49 and 1960-61.
(Per thousand of population).

	1948-49	1960-61
Bangladesh		
Primary Education	6.34	6.33
Secondary	1.19	1.05
West Pakistan		
Primary	1.75	3.96
Secondary	1.62	2.33

Source: An internal working paper of the Planning Commission, in Curle, *Planning for Education*, p. 78.

Table 4:8 indicates a degree of stagnation and imbalance between the two wings of the country. First, there had been very little educational development in East Pakistan since partition. Second, the educational pyramid which started with a broad base at the lowest level of the primary schools, tapered with unhealthy rapidity. In contrast to this, West Pakistan started with a much smaller primary enrollment and achieved not only a rapid rate of growth but also a more balanced one.

The allocation of resources for education to Bangladesh and West Pakistan indicates the same kind of disparities. Table 4:9 shows the disparities in allocation between the two regions during the Second Plan period.

Table 4:9

Proposed Public Expenditure on Education and Training by Executing authorities, 1960-61 to 1964-65.
(in million Rs.)

	Development Expenditure			Increased Recurring Expenditure		
	Bangladesh	West Pakistan	Centre	Bangladesh	West Pakistan	Centre
Primary	70.0	78.0	6.0	61.2	108.0	4.6
Secondary	78.7	96.4	10.3	68.5	32.6	3.7
Teacher Ed	16.6	17.4	0.3	5.6	9.5	.5
Technical	61.7	60.2	7.2	23.7	23.6	3.3
Higher	84.7	64.5	18.5	13.6	8.0	1.5
Scholarship	15.0	15.0	16.5	...	...	...
Foreign Training	3.0	3.2	7.8	...	...	...
Cadet Corps & Service	1.4	1.4	3.0	11.5	11.5	6.8
Cultural Act.	12.0	5.4	15.9	1.5	4.1	10.8
Other Schemes of Ministry of Education	...	...	7.0	...	...	11.0
Expansion of Ed. Ministry	...	...	...	...	...	1.0
Direction & Inspection	...	...	...	4.8	8.1	.4
Special Areas	...	7.5	1.2	...	4.2	3.1
Scientific Research	...	...	65.0	...	...	...
Technical Training Centre, Apprenticeship Training	9.8	8.3	1.7	2.0	1.7	1.0
Total	352.9	357.3	160.1	191.6	213.3	47.7
Publicity Schemes	5.0	5.0	10.1	5.0	10.0	40.0
Grand Total	357.9	362.3	170.2	196.6	223.3	87.7

Source:Pakistan,*The Second Plan*, pp. 353-54.
Note:It should be noted here that expenditure for centre was used in the Federal area of West Pakistan.

4.4 The Impact of Disparities on Primary Education in Bangladesh

The discriminatory distribution of educational resources between the East and the West Wings of the country had an adverse effect on the development of primary education in Bangladesh during the pre-independence period. The limited funds spent for the provision and improvement of education were concentrated mainly in the urban areas to the neglect of the rural ones. Furthermore, a large share of these resources was spent on the expansion of the secondary and tertiary levels of education which benefitted mainly the elite segment of the society. Therefore, the development of primary education lagged behind.

Table 4:10 shows the increase in enrollment which occurred at different levels of the education system in Bangladesh from 1950 to 1972. The figures indicate the very slow rate of expansion of primary education as compared to college and university education. Between 1960-61 and 1972-73 the percentage increase in enrollment in primary schools was only 80% compared to the 600% increase both in college and university education.

Table 4:11 which shows the primary school enrollment in Bangladesh for selective years during the Pakistan period further indicates how the primary education in Bangladesh was neglected. After 1947-48, there was even an actual decrease in the enrollment in primary schools up to 1954-55. From then on, the rate of increase was rather slow, up to at

Table 4:10

Development of Education in Bangladesh From 1950-72.

Level of Education	Period	% Increase in Enrollment
Primary	1950-51 to 1960-61	36
	1960-61 to 1972-73	80
Secondary	1950-51 to 1960-61	6
	1960-61 to 1972-73	219
Intermediate	1950-51 to 1960-61	185
	1960-61 to 1972-73	522
College (Degree)	1950-51 to 1960-61	180
	1960-61 to 1972-73	600
Universities	1960-61 to 1972-73	600

Source: T. Islam, *An Analysis of Public Recurring Expenditure of Higher Education*, Government of Bangladesh,(Dacca: University Grants Commission, 1975), table 13, p. 28.

Table 4:11

Primary School-Age Population and Enrollment (Classes I-V) in Bangladesh for Selected Years.

Year	Population (age 6-10)	Enrollment	% Enrolled
1947-48	...	2756719	...
1949-50	...	2578387	...
1954-55	...	2728777	...
1959-60	...	3277009	...
1964-65	9097594	4158514	45.71
1967-68	9500077	5037138	53.02

Source: L. M. Sarma Roy and R. W. Schmeding,"Enrollment in M. Haque and R.W. Schmeding(eds.),*The Education in East Pakistan Research Project* (Dacca:IER, University of Dacca, 1970), table 1, p. 565.

least 1960. Between 1964-65 and 1967-68, the percentage of the primary age school population enrolled in schools increased from 45.71% to 53.02%.

The sex ratios of students attending primary schools in Bangladesh improved only gradually between 1950 and 1970, i.e., during the Pakistan period. This can be seen in Table 4:12 which shows that despite the improvements, only 32% of primary school enrollment in 1970 consisted of girls, who constituted 50% of the total primary school age children. The slow improvement of girls' enrollment did not tie in with the professed goal of different developmental plans of Pakistan, which repeatedly indicated the importance of a rapid increase of girls' enrollment. In fact, this continued marked imbalance in enrollment between boys and girls was one of the reasons for the slow pace at which the goal of UPE was being achieved.

The total enrollment at the primary level did not provide the full picture of what was really happening at the primary school level. There were large numbers of pupils who enrolled in primary schools and then dropped out before completing the school year. The dropout rate was very high, especially in classes I and II. So the actual retention of the pupils until class V was negligible. Although there was a steady improvement in the retention rate - from around 9.7% in 1953 to 25.1% in 1965 - this increased retention had had little effect on the target of UPE.

Table 4:12

Ratios of Enrollment Among Primary School Age Population by Sex for Selected Years.

Date	Ratio Boys:Girls
1950	80:20
1955	74:26
1960	72:28
1965	70:30
1970	68:32

Source: E. Satter, *UPE in Bangladesh*, pp. 32,36.

So far only a picture of the quantitative underdevelopment of primary education has been presented. As far as the quality of education went, the situation - which will be discussed elaborately in the next chapter - was even worse. In short, it can be said that after more than a decade since the official acceptance of the goal of UPE, there was virtually very little effort made by the West Pakistani ruling group to achieve this goal.

The foregoing analysis reveals that efforts towards universalizing primary education were far from adequate to achieve the professed goals. In fact, the difference between what was done, as opposed to what was said, or formally planned for primary education, could largely be accounted for by the fact that those in high positions in the political and administrative systems of the society were in reality much more interested in providing education for the middle and upper classes in the society than for the rural poor. To some extent, it reflected what was happening through the society as a whole. In an elitist society, such as Pakistan was, the powerful group was concerned with maintaining the status quo and its own position within it. Therefore, the stress was more on secondary and higher education, which involved the transfer of resources from the poor to the rich. As Huq observes, "This is illustrative of the situation prevalent in the developing countries in general because their fiscal systems are substantially dependent on indirect taxation, the burden of which is also shared by the poor".[185]

However, the interesting fact is that the powerful group which makes and implements policies often utters words and phrases such as "equality of opportunity" or "human rights" when in fact they are mainly concerned with strengthening their own position in the society.[186] This discrepancy between the stated purpose and the performance meant that after more than twenty years of efforts at the universalization of primary education, Bangladesh fell far short of achieving the target of UPE. As the Fourth Plan (1970-75) of Pakistan admits, "the base of primary education is too inadequate either to provide facilities for universal education or lasting literacy".[187]

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[185] Huq, *Education, Manpower and Development*, p.15.

[186] This can be seen in the Fourth Plan (1970-75) strategy, when Pakistan was going through a severe challenge from Bangladesh because of the disproportionate share between the two wings. To calm down the people of Bangladesh and the masses slightly larger resources were allocated to the Eastern part. Also, primary education for the first time received a great deal of attention. However, before implementing the Plan, Bangladesh broke away from Pakistan.

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[187] Pakistan, *The Fourth Plan*, p. 153.

5. THE EMERGENCE OF BANGLADESH AND EFFORTS IN UNIVERSAL PRIMARY EDUCATION

A sudden military crackdown in March 1971 galvanized an East Pakistani autonomy movement into an independence struggle. In December 1971, after a bloody and violent struggle, Bangladesh became independent.This event raised high hopes and expectations among the population. After almost twenty-five years of West Pakistani domination, the people of Bangladesh had won their independence to determine their own fate. There was no "outsider" to exploit the Bengalis culturally, economically and politically. It was hoped that the independence would provide the nation with opportunities to shape its own economy according to its own priorities and within its own perspective.

Similarly, in the education sector, literacy and mass education, which had been neglected so far, were perceived as the vital instruments for the development of the country. For this, the universalization of primary education was viewed as a major goal which will allow for the involvement of the masses in the task of nation building. Further, universalizing primary education would provide the majority of the people with a chance of acquiring minimum basic education, which they believed was their "right".

However, the educational situation did not change even after the liberation. On the contrary, the overall position of the country became worse than before.

5.1 The Socio-economic and Political Situation

The social, economic and political situation since the emergence of Bangladesh had strong influence on education and therefore, on the underachievement of the target of UPE by 1980. A general discussion on the situation will explain how these factors contributed to the failure to achieve the target.

A number of factors were responsible for this deterioration - one of the major ones being the devastating war with West Pakistan which dislocated not only the lives of many people but also the institutional structure of the country. Added to this, there was rapid population growth, low productivity, a slow rate of the economic growth and constant political instability. Moreover, this deteriorating condition was further reinforced by the structural features which the country inherited from the colonial days. The basic features of social and economic structure inherited from the colonial and the Pakistan days were unchanged and this along with the very limited resources of a large number of people made economic progress difficult.

5.1.1 Economic Situation

Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries of the world, with a per capita income of US $70 per annum in 1972.[188] The total population of Bangladesh which was over 77 million in 1974 reached 93 million by 1980.[189] This large number of people squeezed into only 55,126 square miles of area made Bangladesh one of the most densely populated countries of the world. The population density was 1,675 persons per square mile in 1980 and the rate of population growth was 2.5% per annum.[190]

Bangladesh had made little progress in increasing its rate of economic growth or in relieving poverty and unemployment since independence. And, the imbalance between the increasing population and the food supply became greater over time. The situation was further aggravated by bad harvests due to unfavorable weather in 1972 and again in 1974, accompanied by floods and famine in late 1974.[191]

About 50% of the population was under 15 years of age making the dependency rates on the working population very high.[192] The country is overwhelmingly rural with 80% of its labor force in agriculture and 60% of its GNP derived from that source. In fact in absolute size Bangladesh has the fourth largest agricultural population in the world next to China, India and the Soviet Union. About 30% of the labor force suffers from underemployment and unemployment.[193] The country has very limited natural resources and a difficult terrain which is frequently ravaged by floods and cyclones. Only about one-third of the cultivated area is entirely free of floods. Of the rest, about 40% is moderately flooded to less than 3 feet and the remainder to a depth of 6 feet or more.[194]

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[188] Faaland and Parkinson, *Bangladesh*, p. 1.
[189] The facts about the population of Bangladesh are not accurately known. Census are very inacqurate. In an underdeveloped country, such as Bangladesh, they are subject to considerable error, despite all the efforts made to check the data and monitor the work of enumerators. The census of 1974 was no exception. First estimate from this census indicated a population of 71.1 million. Later it appeared that this might be an underestimate of as much as 8 percent. So the indicated figures certainly require revision. See Ibid., *Bangladesh*, p. 93.
[190] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 3.
[191] N. Islam, *Development Strategy of Bangladesh* (Oxford:Pergamon Press, 1978), p. 92.
[192] J.F. Stepneke, *Bangladesh - Equitable Growth?* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1979), p. 16.

The most important agricultural products are rice and jute. In 1973-74, about 87.6% of the area cultivated was devoted to these two crops, while sugar cane (1.2%), wheat (1.1%), tea(0.4%) together accounted for an additional 5.5% of the cultivated area.[195] The output from large and small scale industries constituted about 7.6% and 2.7% respectively of GNP of Bangladesh. The jute manufacturing industry accounted for 75% of the industrial output. Textile industries (jute and cotton) provided the largest source of employment in the industrial sector 73%. The food and beverage (9.5%) and chemical and pharmaceutical industries (6.5%) accounted for 89% of the large scale industrial employment.[196] Among the remainder of the industrial sector, employment provided by cottage industries accounted for more than 90% of the total employment of labor in the cottage and small scale industries combined. The majority of this was rural; in fact, 80% of the employment in these industries was in the rural areas.[197]

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[193] Islam, *Development Strategy*, p. 2.

[194] Ibid., p. 1.

[195] Government of Bangladesh, Bureau of Agricultural Statistics, M. Alamgir, "Some Aspects of Bangladesh Agriculture etc.", *The Bangladesh Development Studies*, July 1975, in Islam, *Development Strategy*, p. 2.

The explanation of poverty in Bangladesh lies in the historical facts discussed in the previous chapters. It was aggravated further by the disruptive and destructive effects of the war of liberation of 1971. This resulted in considerable damage to physical infrastructure as well as a dislocation of the institutional and organizational framework of development administration. The material damage was estimated at about $1,2000 million.[198] But such an estimate cannot be regarded as very precise. It cannot take into account many of the intangible costs, not even the effects of the war in delaying the recovery of production to normal levels. There was an absolute fall in gross domestic production since independence. In 1971-72, per capita income was about 22 percent lower than in 1969-70 in constant prices of 1972-73. Table 5:1 indicates the growth (or more accurately decline) and the sectoral distribution of GDP between 1969-70 to 1975-76 in million of takas.[199]

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[196] Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, *The First Five Year Plan 1973-78;* also in Bureau of Statistics, *The Survey of Small and Household Industries*, 1970, in ibid., pp. 2-3.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Faaland and Parkinson, *Bangladesh*, p. 12.

In the first year of the Five Year Plan (1973-78), the industrial output was 25% and the agricultural output 12%-13% lower than in 1969-70.[200] According to the First Five Year Plan (1973-78)the expectation was to achieve a 5.5% rate of growth of overall GDP over the five years and a rate of growth of per capita GDP of about 2.5%. Compared to the depressed levels of 1972-73, the Plan demanded much higher rates of growth, i.e., about a rate of growth of 8.8% in GDP and 5.7% in per capita GDP. In short, the economy was expected not only to recover to the levels of 1969-70 but also to increase beyond that level at the rates of growth indicated above.[201]

However, the targets of the First Plan were far from being reached. This was partly because of the shortfalls in the implementation capacity - especially very slow improvement in organization and management and partially because of shortfall in resources. The shortfall of resources was mainly caused by the inadequate recovery of the economy, especially the agricultural sector, which was the victim of droughts and floods, resulting in recurrent bad harvests. The world wide adverse turn in trade and

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[199] The Taka replaced the Rupee as the name of the currency after Bangladesh's independence. Its rate of exchange was fixed at approximately Taka 7.9=$1 (U.S.dollar) until May 1975, when it was devalued to Taka 15=$1. See Stepnek,*Equitable Growth?* p. 19-20.

[200] *The Annual Plans, 1972-73, 1973-74, 1974-75*, in Islam, *Development Strategy*, p. 4.

[201] Ibid.

Table 5:1

Growth and Sectoral Distribution of GDP
(in constant prices of 1972-73, million takas)

Sectoral distribution	1969-70	1972-73	1973-74	1974-75	1975-76
	Percentage of GDP				
Agriculture	61.4	60.1	61.1	58.7	59.6
Industry	8.3	7.3	7.6	7.4	6.9
Large scale	(5.1)	(4.6)	(4.9)	(4.7)	(4.4)
Small Scale	(3.2)	(2.3)	(2.7)	(2.7)	(2.5)
Construction	4.6	3.2	1.5	3.4	3.6
Power and Gas	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.6
Transport services	4.6	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.2
Trade services	7.5	7.8	7.9	7.8	7.8
Housing services	4.4	5.2	4.9	4.9	4.6
Public administration	2.4	2.9	3.9	4.9	4.9
Banking and Insurance	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7
Professional and other services	6.1	7.1	6.6	6.5	6.1

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, in N. Islam, *Development Strategy*, P. 95.

inflation, resulting in a drastic fall in terms of trade for Bangladesh, further diminished the chance of the resources availability in the country.

Another reason of failure of increased production lies in the fact that, as N. Islam contended, by the time of the independence there was no set of widely-shared convictions or consensus within the ruling group or among the leaders of opinion at large, either about the character and nature of the future economic system of independent Bangladesh or about the strategies and policies of development. In fact, the economic principles of the new constitution formulated in 1972 were in the nature of broad declaration of intent, which were planned without careful scrutiny.[202]

It was not until 1975-76 that aggregate GDP exceeded the level reached in 1969-70. This was mainly due to the increase in agricultural output, especially output of foodgrain, largely because of very good weather. In 1975-76 the total industrial output was still lower than that of 1969-70. Substantial recovery took place in transport and services from the damages and destruction caused by the war.[203]

5.1.2 Political Atmosphere

Just after independence the political leadership of Bangladesh tried to deal with the economic condition, poverty and underdevelopment by attempting a wide-ranging "socialistic transformation" which was a form of reaction to the Pakistani exploitation. In fact, the years since independence have been a period of experiment with different styles of government. The ruling party, the Awami (People's)

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[202] N. Islam, *Development Planning in Bangladesh: A Study in Political Economy* (London: C. Hurst And Co., 1977), pp. 2-3. It should be noted that Professor Islam was Deputy Chairman of the Bangladesh Planning Commission when the First Five Year Plan was prepared and had extensive experience on the planning machinery of Bangladesh, the problem it faced in terms of application of economic tools of planning and analysis and how it functioned in relation to the rest of the governmental machinary and decision making processes. His work *Development Planning in Bangladesh* gives a detailed picture on these issues.

[203] Government of Bangladesh, *Economic Survey*, 1975-76, in Islam, *Development Strategy*, p. 4.

League and its political leadership had gained its pre-eminent role mainly as a nationalist party. It was the vanguard in the emergence of Bengali nationalism in the 1950s and 1960s. The promise of emancipation from the economic exploitation and political domination of Pakistan raised the Party's popularity in the mass level.

Subsequently, the Party programs, pronouncements and election manifestos before and after liberation had placed strong emphasis on an "exploitation-free" society and emancipation of the oppressed masses.[204] The constitution of the country reflected this ideology and the economic objectives of Bangladesh, as they were perceived by the Party which then framed the constitution. The fundamental principles of the constitution were Democracy, Nationalism, Secularism and Socialism. These proclamations raised high popular expectations and the Party had overwhelming support from all cadres of the people.

However, instead of reform, the country saw itself on the verge of serious social and economic chaos. Belatedly, Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, the governing party leader, became aware of the popular resentment, declared emergency power in December, 1974 and suspended the constitution in an effort to reorganize the whole economic and political system. The imposition of a presidential form of government and dissolution of parliament followed in Janauary, 1975. All the political parties were banned and a new one party system was introduced.[205]

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[204] See for detailed discussion on the policies and ideology of the Awami League N. Islam, *Development Planning*, especially chapter 1.

Further, in an attempt to end corruption, to achieve industrial and agricultural self-sufficiency, to control population growth and recreate the sense of national unity, the Sheikh announced a "Second Revolution". Economic centralization was to be de-emphasized and the private sector was to be given greater scope. Therefore, the second revolution reversed the fundamental principles of the constitution and the Awami League.[206]

In March 1975, the Sheikh announced further reforms. For the landless farmers, compulsory agricultural cooperatives were to be introduced in every district. In fact, this was the first time that a program addressed the needs of the increasing numbers of landless and tenant farmers.[207]

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[205] The development which occurred in early 1975 and especially the establishment of one party system indicates that the commitment to democratic principles and institutions was not without reservations or at least that in the years following 1971 there was a change in the attitude of its leadership. See for more discussion on this point ibid., p. 38.

[206] See for more on these points Stepanek, *Equitable Growth?* pp. 6-19. Although some of his observations provide important insights about political and economic conditions of the Sheikh regime, he fails to realize the fact that economic chaos and famine in late 1974 was also due to natural calamities and international politics of which the country became victim. The United States in 1974 held up food aid because Bangladesh sold jute to Cuba. See "Bangladesi Aid: The new ruling class" in *South*, No.17, March, 1982, p.46-47. Also see how this late arrival of aid affected domestic production N. Islam *Development Planning*, p. 12. Islam points out that "the fluctuations in the volume of imports caused widespread underutilization of capacity and interruption in domestic production. It stopped construction activity, a vital component of investment largely dependent on imported materials..."

The coup in August 1975 and the brutal assassination of Sheikh Mujibur Rahman[208] and subsequent coups and turmoil were evidence of political instability which had unpredictable effects on the society and the economy. The failure of the most popular party and the political leadership can be explained by the inability to cope with the conflicting interests of the different social groups within the party. There were, in fact, various classes or groups which directly or indirectly influenced the socio-economic policies and strategies through their control of or influence on the political process and machinery. The most notable interest groups were the rich farmers, trading and marketing intermediaries (the mercantile class) engaged in domestic and foreign trade and small-scale entrepeneurs earnestly hoping to develop into medium and large-scale industries. These all played a prominent role in the socio-economic life of the country and a direct or indirect role in the political process. Furthermore, there were the industrial trade unions which, though small, formed important pressure groups, as well as the students who, though a separate category, contained within themselves a wide range of ideological factions. Other interest groups were members of the public service, including the army, the professionals and the intelligentsia.

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[207] Stepanek, *Equitable Growth?*, p. 9.

[208] See for some facts about the murder of the Sheikh and his family which were unknown to the public until recently Lawrance Lifschultz, *Bangladesh - The Unfinished Revolution* (London: Zed Press, 1979), Part II. The book provides a detailed picture of the involvement of a Western Capitalist power in the coup and the murder of the Sheikh.

The ruling political leadership was mainly the representative of these important interest groups and acted in reality as the "intermediate class".[209] For these groups N. Islam noted that Bangladesh was an apt example of "intermediate regime" which was neither characterised nor dominated by the large capitalist enterprises in industry or the feudal landlords or by the proletariat control of ownership of the means of production.[210] The leadership of the social and political institutions at the national level as well as at the local government level was held or dominated by members of this "intermediate class".[211] Within these groups there were conservative and radical forces, both of which were contesting for supremacy within the Awami League. To satisfy both groups the party leadership was in an ambivalent position. As N. Islam noted:

> The leadership of the party at the apex stood in the middle and appeared not to have firm convictions of its own in either direction. It was willing to make advances towards socialistic and egalitarian policies provided there were not serious challenges by the conservative groups or vested interests. The leadership of the party opted for a continuous compromise, taking one step in one direction offset by another in the opposite direction. The leadership was in favour of keeping its options open. It could not go against the socio-economic groups which were dominant in the economy and in the organisational structure of the party. It was feared that any curtailment in the power and privileges of these

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[209] Islam, *Development Planning*, p. 3.
[210] See for detailed discussion Islam, *Development Strategy*, chapter 7.
[211] Ibid., p. 86.

> groups which they could not be persuaded to accept through the force of enlightened self-interest would alienate them.[212]

5.1.3 Dimensions of Inequality in Bangladesh

Bangladesh was not only one of the poorest countries of the world in terms of average per capita income, but also it suffered from substantial inequality in income distribution between different groups of people. The highest 20% of the population received about 46% of the national income in 1963-64 whereas the lowest 20% received 7%.[213] The inequality was greater in the urban areas with the top 20% receiving 57% of the total urban income. Again, the average income of the urban population was about two-thirds higher than the average rural income. Thus the urban rich were more affluent than the rural rich.[214]

The inequality in the distribution of rural income was mainly caused by unequal land holding. In 1968, 57% of the farms were less than 2.5 acres each and accounted for 21% of the cultivated area, while 7.9% of the farms above 7.5 acres in size accounted for 31% of the area under cultivation. In 1968, about 16%-17% of the rural labor force were wage earners and 30%-40% of the rural labor force were landless laborers and farmers owning less than an acre of land. This latter group comprised about 18% of the rural labor force.[215] The inequality in urban areas was caused by inequalities in income between the modern sector and the traditional rural sector. The modern sector consisted of large scale industry and trade including the foreign trade sector and services, particularly government services. The so-called traditional sector (excluding peasant farmers) comprised of petty traders, small scale industry and self-employed workers and artisans in the building trades. Within the modern sector itself, there was a marked disparity in income between unskilled wage earners and the rest. In the years between 1971-72 and 1974-75, real wages in the large manufacturing sector actually declined.[216] It should also be noted that between 1970 and 1975 real wages of helpers and of all unskilled and urban unskilled workers fell by 41% and 58% respectively.[217] However, on the whole, the large disparities in income distribution between poor and rich were mainly caused by the inequality in the income distribution between the modern or high wage sector and the traditional or low wage sector - a feature which was predominant in nearly every Third World country.

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[212] Islam, *Development Planning*, pp. 4-5.
[213] Islam, *Development Strategy*, p. 5. Because of lack of data on income distribution in the period between 1972 to 1980 the data of 1963-64 are given. It will at least provide some ideas. In fact, it seems this gap of income distribution was increased over the period.
[214] A. Bergen, "Personal Income and Savings in Pakistan, in *The Pakistan Development Review*, Summer 1967, cited in Ibid.

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[215] *Census of Agriculture 1960; Master Survey of Agriculture 1968*, cited in ibid., p. 5.

[216] N. Chowdhury, "Real Wages in Nationalised Sector in Bangladesh", a paper presented at *Second Annual Conference of Bangladesh Economic Association*, March 1976, cited in ibid.

[217] M. Alamgir, "Some Analysis of Distribution of Income, Consumption, Saving and Poverty in Bangladesh", *The Bangladesh Development Studies*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 1974.

There was an increase in the incidence of rural poverty and inequality during the late 1960's. For example, the absolute number of landless laborers increased from 1.51 million in 1951 to 2.51 million in 1963-64 and to 3.40 million in 1967-68. The small farmers, those with operational holdings (i.e., as compared to owned holdings) of less than 2.5 acres increased from 51.6% of the total holdings, cultivating 16.2% of total land in 1960, to 56.6% cultivating 21.4% of total land in 1967-68. This process continued in the early 1970's. By 1975, 70% of rural households and 62% of the rural population were absolutely poor, while 50.5% of rural households and 41% of the rural population were extremely poor. Rural poverty and inequality were further aggravated by the falling trend of real wages in agriculture. The average real wages were 50% lower in 1975 in comparison with those enjoyed in 1963-64. Employment opportunity in agricultural sectors also lagged behind by the increase of the agricultural labor force.[218]

M. Alamgir[219] indicated, on the basis of a Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies (BIDS) survey of 1,776 households in eight villages carried out in 1973-74, that 33% of the households were landless. Another estimate with a slight variation in definition of landlessness put the proportion of landless laborers at 37.60%.[220] The per capita income estimated by the BIDS survey was Taka 459 for small farmers, Taka 414 for tenant farmers and Taka 345 for landless laborer. These levels were all below the poverty line and inadequate to meet the basic needs. According to the survey, 40% of the landless laborers were employed in non-agricultural operations, as agriculture could not absorb all the laborers.[221]

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[218] Islam, *Development Strategy*, p. 7.

[219] M. Alamgir, *Bangladesh: A Case Study of Below Poverty Level Equilibrium Trap* (unpublished study),(Dacca: Bangladesh Institute of Development Studies, 1976). cited in Husain, *Educational Reform*, pp. 83-84.

Alamgir had also estimated on the basis of the BIDS survey that unemployment including underemployment, defined as excess supply of labor expressed in man-days over the actual number of man-days worked by all working adults, amounted to 32% on an average among all villagers.[222] No recent study and estimate of unemployment and underemployment in the urban areas of Bangladesh is available. An estimate quoted by Ahmed for 7 principal major cities in Bangladesh in 1962-66 provided the rate of unemployment and underemployment as ranging from 19.7% to 47.6%.[223] The problem of unemployment and underemployment was further aggravated by the rapid growth of population.

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[220] A. A. Abdullah, et. al. "Agrarian Structure and IRDP: Preliminary Consideration", in *The Bangladesh Development Studies*, Vol. IV, No. 2, 1976.

[221] M. Alamgir,*Bangladesh: A Case Study*, cited in Husain,*Educational Reform*, p. 192.

[222] Ibid.

[223] I. Ahmed, "Employment in Bangladesh: Problems and Prospects", in E. A. G. Robinson and K. Griffin (eds.),*The Economic Development of Bangladesh within a Socialist Framework* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd., 1974), p. 247.

Besides the inequalities in income distribution between urban and rural areas, there were wide disparities in the distribution of facilities between these areas. The urban sector received a disproportionately large share of public resources to provide for social and economic infrastructure, i.e., roads, power, water supply and sewerage, health and educational facilities and direct industrial investment. A large part of private resources originating in the rural areas had also been appropriated by the urban sector through the mechanism of 'price twists' as described by Lipton.[224] As small farmers had weak marketing power, they were usually obliged to sell their produce immediately after harvest at a relatively low price to clear their debts and buy the same produce later at a higher price, often incurring a debt. The low harvest prices generally benefited (and still does) the marketing intermediaries and urban consumers. Surplus farmers[225] had also been penalised by government procurement of produce at less than market price for the benefit of urban consumers. The maintenance of an over-valued exchange rate and tax on primary exports depressed prices and returns to the producers of cash crops, and benefited urban industry. Urban industry received not only foreign exchange for their machinery and other inputs at the official rate of exchange but also credit from government supported financial institutions at a subsidised rate, while producing commodities at highly protected artificial prices. The scarce foreign exchange earned by the rural sector was used to import luxury goods catering to the demand of the urban rich. The rural areas lacked the most essential health facilities, since most of the scarce medical talent and facilities were concentrated in urban areas. Resources were also not forthcoming for a mass education program which was essential to provide a minimum level of educational facilities to the masses of rural areas, while large sums were spent for elite levels of education in the urban areas for a small group of people. This system made little contribution to overall development.[226] In fact, over-expansion of secondary and higher levels of education created developmental problems by producing unemployment and underemployment among the graduates from these levels.

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[224] M. Lipton, *Why Poor People Stay Poor: Urban Bias in World Development* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Pres, 1977), see especially Chapter 13.

[225] Surplus farmers are those who derive rents from tenant and subsidies from the government. See for the definition of surplus farmers N. Islam, *Developmental Planning*, p. 22.

The increasing inequalities in income distribution and wide disparities in the social services were in fact the result of the developmental strategies the country followed since the pre-independence period. Development was mainly related to a narrow concept of materialistic and urban oriented economy and increased GNP. Efforts to develop the modern sector of the economy at the cost of the agricultural sector was the major preoccupation of the developmental strategies of the country and reinforced the perpetuation of the existing inequalities. The urban modern sector bias in the economy also created bias in the distribution of the educational facilities for different groups of people. The education system was geared to produce skilled middle and higher level manpower for the modern sector, while the primary level of education was neglected.

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[226] See latter in this chapter the discussion on allocation of resources in different levels of education.

5.2 Efforts in Universal Primary Education Since 1972

A major problem in assessing the efforts in UPE in Bangladesh is that its objectives have not been made explicitly clear in the post independence period.[227] However, the constitution of Bangladesh, which was framed within a few months of the country's independence, provided some broad guidelines for educational development, and one of its expressed concerns was the universalization of primary education. The "Fundamental Principles" of state policy as embodied in the constitution of the country laid down that "the state shall adopt effective measures for the purpose of:

1. establishing a uniform, mass-oriented and universal system of education and extending free and compulsory education to all children to such stages as may be determined by law;

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[227] The Second Five Year Plan (1981-85) states clearer objectives of UPE, which will be discussed briefly later in this chapter. However, the period of 1981-85 is not covered in this study.

2. relating education to the needs of society and producing properly trained and motivated citizens to serve those needs;
3. removing illiteracy within such time as may be determined by law.[228]

The other provisions in the "Fundamental Principles" which were closely linked with educational development were:

1. The state shall endeavour to ensure equality of opportunity to all citizens.
2. The state shall adopt effective measures to remove social and economic inequality between man and man, and to ensure the equitable distribution of wealth among citizens, and or opportunities in order to attain a uniform level of economic development throughout the Republic.[229]

In 1972, the Bangladesh Education Commission was set up to elaborate the basic objectives of educational development and work out a strategy for attaining its goals. This Commission on education was set up to examine the educational system in detail, to make recommendations for future structure and development of the system, and to prepare a comprehensive educational plan. In May 1974, the Commission submitted its report which stated that one of the major goals of the education system was to promote "love of country, national solidarity and responsible citizenship".[230] The Report visualized a key role for education in the reconstruction of the society, reflecting the basic principles of socialism, democracy, nationalism and secularism as embodied in the country's constitution. It was argued that education must promote moral values and serve as an instrument of social change. Further, it was suggested that in order to create an egalitarian and democratic society, education must be provided to all the people according to their ability and aptitudes on the basis of equality of opportunity. Every citizen, it suggested, must be assured of a minimum standard of education. The education system must also serve as a means for moulding the attitudes and values of the people so as to make them agents of sustained progress and for eliminating superstition, mismanagement and corruption from social and economic systems. It was further observed that a major responsibility of the system was to increase the skill and capability of the people so that they could contribute to the social and economic advancement of the country. Further, in the new situation of an independent Bangladesh, education was viewed as essential to foster independent thinking, creativity, managerial ability and qualities of leadership.[231] To attain these goals, democratization of primary education became the major concern of the country.

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[228] Constituent Assembly of Bangladesh, *The Constitution of the People's Republic of Bangladesh*, Dacca, 1972, Part II, Sec. 17. Cited in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 29.
[229] Ibid.

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[230] Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, *Bangladesh Education Commission Report*, (Dacca: 1974), p. 1, in ibid., p. 29.
[231] Ibid., p. 30.

The Report of the Education Commission was accepted by the Government in its essentials and, therefore, provided important guidelines for educational reform and planning in the country. But it became available only long after the preparation of the First Plan (1973-78) and, in the absence of a clear directives from the Government about its educational goals, the planners therefore did not have much to go on.[232]

Nevertheless, a few key objectives in the document could be identified. These were:

1. Education must have relevance to the future work and life, and must provide adequate preparation for productive employment.
2. The system should produce ... a cadre of skilled manpower required for the developmental needs of the country.
3. All citizens should have an inherent right to a minimum level of education and be able to receive it at any age convenient to them. ... All children must, however, be assured of basic formal education at least at the primary level.

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[232] It should be noted that although the Plan was an excellent document technically, a serious drawback of the Plan was that there had been no popular participation in its preparation. The Plan was approved by the Cabinet with some modifications but never debated in the Parliament. There seemed to be no deep commitment towards the Plan by the politicians as well as the Ministers. For detailed discussion on these aspects of the Plan, see Islam, *Development Planning*, Chapters I and II.

4. Educational facilities of a basic minimum standard will be made available at all educational institutions regardless of whether they are located in the rural areas or in the cities, and whether they are managed by the government or by private individuals.
5. Education...must be able to enrich the cultural attainments of the people.[233]

As in the case of the objectives, the strategies to achieve them were also vaguely expressed without a clear indication of priorities. The strategies included the following: improving the quality of education by making an optimum use of the number of trained teachers; strengthening science education in both schools and colleges; giving greater emphasis on vocational training; providing central laboratories and community workshops attached to schools and vocational training institutions; making higher education selective; spreading effective adult literacy; encouraging sports and cultural activities and giving special attention to female education.[234]

The First Plan (1973-78) however, spelled out the major objectives of the country with reference to primary education. These objectives were:

1. The total enrollment in primary school would go up to about 2.6 million from a base of 6 million to 8.5 million.

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[233] Bangladesh, *The First Plan*, p. 446-47.
[234] Ibid., pp. 447-48.

2. The percentage of primary age-group students attending schools would increase from 50% to 73% in 1978.
3. Ninety percent of the boys of primary age-group would be given access to primary education during the Plan period, compared to 76% who were attending during the formulation of the Plan.
4. Participation of girls would be accelerated. At the time of planning, 40% of the girls of the primary school age group attended schools. This would have to be raised to 55% during the plan period and would lead to an increase in actual enrollment of girls in the system by 1.1 lakh as compared to 1.4 lakh for boys.
5. The curriculum at the primary level would be revised to make it more relevant to the real life situation in the country.
6. Text books, writings and instructional materials would be supplied to all children free of cost or at subsidized rates.
7. Drop out rates would be reduced from 63 percent to 52 percent by undertaking supplementary and non-formal education measures such as the development of well-designed educational programs through radio and television. Innovative measures such as provision of feeder schools, child feeding programs, female teachers, sports and recreational facilities and synchronisation of holidays with crop seasons, would be introduced to reduce drop-outs between class I and class II, where the

problem was more acute.

8. Educated housewives would be encouraged to teach in primary schools.[235]

In order to achieve these objectives, the First Five Year Plan (1973-78) also envisaged an expansion of enrollment at the primary level by 43% including a marked increase in the enrollment of girls. The resources allocated for primary education in the plan was 577.22 million taka[236] and this was followed by an allocation of 800 million taka in the Two-Year Plan (1978-80).

In the first four objectives of the Plan (1973-78), emphasis was mainly directed towards increasing enrollment. However, none of these targets had been realized by 1978 or even by 1980. Although the population has increased by about 2.5% per annum between 1975 and 1980, there has been no corresponding increase in primary school enrollment. In fact, during the late 1970s, enrollment had not only stagnated but also declined.[237] Earlier it was difficult for poorer families to send their children to school, but this became impossible for many of them due to the famine of 1974 and the increased price of text books in 1978. So, by 1981, the estimated enrollment in the primary schools was 8.2 million - as compared to an expected enrollment of 8.5 million by 1978. This means that 30% or more of all the 12 million children of primary school age were not enrolled in school. Also the dropout rate had not been reduced. As a result, education still failed to touch effectively upon almost half the children of the primary school-age group.[238]

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[235] Bangladesh, *The First Plan*, pp. 451-52.
[236] See table 5:6 and 5:7.
[237] See table 5:4.

A new curriculum for the primary school and new text books were introduced for classes I-V.[239] However, apart from omitting all references to the old Pakistan, the text books remained much the same in content and style. Also, prices of everything increased fourfold as compared to the pre-independence period. The effects of inflation made it even more diffcult for poorer children to afford school books. The introduction of free or even subsidized books and writing materials did not materialize until 1980.[240]

The planned innovative measures in the educational system aimed at reducing the dropout rate were also never introduced except in a few experimental projects.[241] The use of mass media remained of marginal significance for primary education. The use of educated house wives as primary school teachers as was originally proposed also did not happen, although the appointment of female teachers was indispensible in order to encourage the attendance of girls. Only since 1980 have female teachers been given preference in the appointment of teachers at the primary level.[242]

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[238] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, pp. 35,84-85.
[239] See latter in this chapter for discussion on curriculum.
[240] Ibid.
[241] Two of these projects will be discussed later briefly.
[242] Ibid., p. 85.

5.3 Factors Which Impeded the Achievement of UPE

Very broadly, two sets of factors contributed to the failure by the country to achieve UPE: first, the contributory factors; and second, the major factor. It should be noted that some of these factors were very much interrelated and, therefore, it was difficult to separate them from each other. The contributory factors can be further sub-divided into two categories: a) in-school factors; and b) out-of-school factors. It should be remembered that most of these factors had strong historical roots. The major factor which acted as an obstacle to achieve the target of UPE by 1980 was the influence of the domestic elite, who were socially, economically and politically powerful and controlled the decision making process. They influenced the educational development in favor of secondary and tertiary levels of education and neglected the issue of primary education for the masses.

5.3.1 In-School Factors

The fact is that despite Bangladesh's being a very poor country, strong inequality existed within this poverty as observed before. There were disparities between urban and rural areas; rich and poor; male and female. The rural schools and urban schools for the children from poor families did not receive enough financial assistance to improve their facilities. Resource allocation to different levels of education within the system showed this class bias. Facilities provided for secondary education were less than for university education while the situation of primary education was the worst. Even at the primary level, strong inequalities existed both in terms of the quantity and the quality of education provided for different groups and different regions of the country.

5.3.1.1 Quantitative Aspect of Primary Education

I. Imbalances in Primary Education: between Urban-Rural and between Sexes:

The existing rural-urban imbalances in development were also apparent in the qualitative distribution of schools. The main urban centres and the smaller towns had better schools in terms of buildings, equipment and staff than did the rural areas. The best of all primary schools were the recognized private schools. Many of these urban private primary schools were staffed by well qualified women, supported by high tuition fees and drew their students from the higher income group families of the society. These inequalities are rooted in every aspect of social life and cannot be easily altered. They will remain as long as the socio-economic structure does not change drastically.

Until 1973 there were four types of primary schools in existence: "government managed", "municipal managed", "aided" and "unaided and unrecognized". The First Plan quoted a figure of 30,446 as the total number of "recognized schools" in 1972, i.e., those covering the first three categories.[243]

Primary education until 1973 developed on the basis of the Bengal Primary Education Act of 1930 and the rules framed under it. Under the Act, primary education was to be free and regulated through District Primary Education Boards which were public statutory bodies with financial and operational autonomy. Primary schools were established by local communities on their own initiative. The schools were mainly administered by managing committees comprised of guardians and interested local persons. They could apply to the Government for recognition once the schools were operating, provided that they met certain land, premises and teacher requirements and conformed to other regulations. The appointment and the payment of teachers were the responsibility of the managing committees. A system of inspection of managed schools and the administration of public funds allocated for education were instituted by the Education Directorate by posting officers at the district, the sub-division and the *thana* (local administrative unit) levels.[244] There were some schools which were recognized private schools even after nationalization[245]

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[243] It should be noted that in Bangladesh, it is very difficult to obtain reliable data from any statistical survey. Different surveys showed the different kinds of figures not only about number of schools but also about enrollment ratio etc. Therefore, for the same year (1972) the Education Directorate provided a figure of 36,536 primary schools. See Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 81.

[244] Ibid., p. 80.

[245] It is not clear from the readings of Sattar's study whether it refers to recognized private schools after nationalization of primary schols in 1974 or before.

[245] and, took no grants from the Government. These schools charged high fees and were managed by Governing Bodies which paid the salaries of the teachers. Most recognized private schools were found in urban areas. Although small in number, they were usually centres of educational excellence.[246]

Apart from these schools, there were non-recognized primary schools all over the country, and these were entirely private schools run by a Governing Body or Management Committee. They constituted 16.5% of all primary schools in 1981. Generally they were not in as good a condition as the government schools and enrollment in these schools was less. Nevertheless, they represented the measure of social demand for primary educational facilities. Eventually, many of them became recognized as government primary schools. In 1969-70, the number of non-recognized schools was 840 and this number started to increase after 1973, resulting in a total of over 7000 by late 1970s although only 500 of them were later recognized by the Government.[247]

A far reaching change in the primary education system was introduced in 1974. The Government passed an act which became effective from October 1973 and which nationalized all primary schools, thus making all the recognized schools government institutions and their teachers government servants. At the same time, the schools' managing committees and District Primary Education Boards ceased to function. Bangladesh Bureau of Educational Information and Statistics (BANBEIS)[248] reported that the total number of primary schools for 1980 was 43,936, of which 36,665 were recognized Government schools, and 7,271 (16.5%) were non-recognized ones.[249] The number of schools available were too few to enroll all the pupils. It should be noted that according to the IER report 90 percent of the recognized primary schools were managed by the Government and the remaining 10 percent were under private control. Among them only 64 were missionary schools. There were 68,000 villages in Bangladesh but, on the average, there was not even one primary school in every village. In the densely populated areas, it was physically impossible for the existing schools to accomodate all the school age children. Large villages with population of 2,000 or more required more than one primary school, or else the existing one needed to operate on an efficient double shift system.[250]

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[245] (cont'd)However, from the author's personal experience it seems that such kinds of schools were in existence even after the nationalization of all recognised schools.

[246] Sattar, *UPE In Bangladesh*, p. 28.

[247] Ibid., p. 28.

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[248] Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, *Bangladesh Bureau of of Educational Information and Statistics*, 1980, cited in ibid., pp. 27,132.

[249] These figures might be exaggerated because the total number of schools according to the same institution (BANBEIS) was 40,313 for 1975, while a report on primary education by Institute of Education and Research (IER) provided a figure of 39,279 primary schools for 1975. There were no other studies available for 1980 to compare the figures provided by BANBEIS. Therefore, the figures should be viewed with caution. For IER report, see *Survey of Primary Schools and Evaluation of Primary School Agricultural Programme in Bangladesh* (Dacca, IER, 1977), p. 12.

i) **Literacy Rate**: The 1974 census of Bangladesh provided some figures pertaining to literacy rates for the population 5 years and above. It indicated that there are major inequalities in the literacy rates both between the rural and the urban areas and between the sexes.

In the rural areas, women had a literacy rate of 10.9%, as compared with a rate of 25.7% for men. In urban areas, these rates were much higher - 27.9% and 45.3% respectively. However, these higher urban rates had little impact on the national average literacy rate because less than 10% of the people resided in the urban areas.[251] For the country as a whole, the literacy rate for females was 13.7 while for males it was 29.9. The low female literacy rate certainly downgraded the already low average national literacy rate, which was only 21.8 of the total population. This was indeed a very low rate if one compares it with other Third World countries.[252]

Furthermore, evidence of the distribution of literacy shows that southern Bangladesh was more advanced than northern Bangladesh. The lowest literacy rates were in the remote areas, those in the far north and on the country's borders far from the major cities and industrial centres.[253]

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[250] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 29.
[251] Ibid., p. 26.
[252] See the statistics for literacy rates of some of the developing countries in the fourth chapter.
[253] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 26.

ii) Education of Girls: In Bangladesh, as in many other societies, the role and the status of women are predetermined and are definitely inferior to that of men. In the sacred commandments of Islam, women were granted a privileged, equal and honored position, and their status was raised considerably higher in the social scale. However, in practice, women continued to play a subordinate role in the Islamic societies, the teachings of Islam with regard to the status of women being ignored.

The unequal status of women was inherent in the country's social and economic environment. A strong barrier against women in many activities such as education, working in the professions and politics was rooted deeply in the society. The "purdah system" which limited a woman's mobility outside her home, may be an extreme example of a highly segregated system of sex role allocation. Women were secluded within the house and were frowned upon if they went out. Conservative guardians prohibited their daughters and sisters from going to schools where most of the teachers and co-students were men. In addition, education of a child demanded a heavy investment of time, money and energy which many families did not want to invest in their daughters because it was viewed as a wasted expenditure. In fact, a girl could never be expected to contribute to the family, either as a wage earner or as a worker in defence and security.

Education, therefore, tended to be seen as irrelevant for girls who were destined for marriage and motherhood at an early age. Although the average legal age of marriage for females was 18, girls got married soon after their puberty, especially in the rural areas. However, in urban areas, the age of marriage for females was sometimes higher. This pattern of early marriage which forced girls to involve themselves in household work, and the general attitude toward female education were largely responsible for the high illiteracy rate among women which also contributed to increasing the average national illiteracy rate.

While these taboos are slowly breaking down in some areas,[254] they still remain in most parts of the country and have hindered girls' enrollment even in the primary schools. Therefore, at present, only about 40% of any girls' cohort enrolls in school. Also their retention rate in school until class V is less than 30%.[255]

One interesting fact is that although girls were the disadvantaged group in the society of Bangladesh, the daughters of rich and high status families had more opportunity to receive not only primary education but also secondary and university education. Further, they enjoyed more freedom of movement than the daughters from poorer families. Whatever representation women had even in the job market it was held by the women from rich and educated families. This indicates that the traditional view against the education of girls is confined mainly to the lower socio-economic groups. Therefore, it seems that if these groups could afford the cost of sending their daughters along with their sons to school they would not have been very reluctant to do so.

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[254] In Meher UPE and in the Ten Intensive Shawnirvar(self-reliant) Thanas. See Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 24.

[255] Ibid.

iii) **Inequalities in Enrollment**: The male/female inequalities in literacy rates are really part of a larger picture. Male attendance outnumbered female attendance not only at the primary level but also at the secondary and tertiary levels. At the primary level, girls comprised 37% of the total enrollment in 1980 - with 3 million girls enrolled in primary school as compared to 5 million boys.[256] The ratio of enrollment between the two sexes at the primary level was improving and girls' enrollment had increased over the decade 1970-80, but very slowly indeed. Table 5:2 shows the ratio of enrollment between the sexes at the primary level from 1970 to 1980.

The sex ratios for teachers were worse than the enrollment ratios in the schools. Only 7% of primary school teachers were women, despite the fact that female teachers are very important if progress is to be made in increasing the enrollment rate of the girls. In fact, it is believed that the presence of female teachers also helps to improve

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[256] At the university level women were 10% of the total enrollment, and at the secondary level they were 23%. See Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 31.

Table 5:2

Ratios of Enrollment at Primary Level Between Sexes, 1970-80.

Date	Ratio boy : girl
1970	68 : 32
1975	64 : 36
1980	63 : 37

Source: E. Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, Table 3.3.

the enrollment and retention rate of boys too because women teachers were said to be more conscientious and less harsh than their male colleagues on the young students.[257]

II) Inefficiency in Schooling: Low Enrollment, Absenteeism, Repetition and Dropouts:

The problem of low enrollment, absenteeism, repetition and dropouts in primary education are quite interlinked and have made a contribution to the slow advance which the country has made towards UPE. In Bangladesh, the factors which are responsible for low enrollments also quite often explain absenteeism, repetition and dropouts among primary school students. As indicated before, in 1980, 30% or more of all the primary school age children could not enroll in schools. Of these many might have repeated and dropped out after a few months or years.[258] Table 5:3 indicates the enrollment at each level of the primary school with the percentage of girls in each class for 1980.

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[257] Teachers' problems will be elaborately later in this chapter.

During the decade of 1970-80, enrollment at the primary level increased from 5 million to 8 million. Unfortunately, as indicated above, the increase in the number of institutions was insufficient to meet the needs of the pupils. However, one of the reasons for the slow growth of primary school institutions was the fact that this sector was severely neglected during the period of Pakistani rule (1947-70). Table 5:4 shows the increased enrollment rate in millions and the number of schools for 1970-80.

The figures indicate that in 1980 enrollment was less than that in 1975. Enrollment declined from almost 8.6 million in 1975 to 8.2 million in 1980. The higher classes in primary schools were the most badly affected. There was a decline in boys' enrollments too, a situation registered for the first time since 1947. Between 1975 and 1980, girls' enrollment also declined by about 30,000; boys' by over 600,000.

Within the country, the class size varied with the physical condition as well as the socio-economic level of different regions. The largest classes were found in the Comilla district of south Bangladesh, which was heavily populated and also well endowed with schools. The marginal

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[258] Table 5:5 indicates the retention rate of primary school-age children.

Table 5:3

Enrollment in Primary Schools for Different Classes and Sexes in 1980.

Class	Boys	Girls	Total	% of Girls
I	2,154,366	1,242,382	3,396,748	36.6
II	1,089,081	663,048	1,752,129	37.8
III	819,811	480,990	1,300,801	37.0
IV	626,731	371,432	988,163	37.2
V	492,042	279,430	771,472	36.2
Total	5,182,031	3,037,282	8,219,313	37.0

Source: BANBEIS in A. Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, table 4.1, p. 35.

Table 5:4

Number of Schools and Enrollment 1970-80.

Year	Schools	Male Enrollment	Female Enrollment	Total Enrollment
1970	28,731	3,453,053	1,620,211	5,073,264
1975	40,313	5,822,336	3,066,616	8,588,952
1980	43,963	5,182,031	3,037,280	8,219,313

Source: E. Sattar,*UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 36.

tribal areas and the coastal islands had the smallest class size. Therefore, the average class I size ranged from 24 in the Chittagong Hill Tracts to 84 in Comilla.[259] However, at the beginning of the academic year, enrollment in many schools are often over 100. The average number of students per class and the percentage distribution of students in each class for 1980 is given in Table 5:5.

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[259] Department of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, *Statistical Profile of Children and Mothers in Bangladesh* (Dacca, 1979), p. 59, Table 5:18, in Ibid.

The figures in the table show the heavy concentration of students in class I. This, in fact indicates the real problem which Bangladesh is facing. The actual number of students enrolled in class I was 3.3 million, which was larger than the actual age cohort. This was because (i) many children enrolled at a later age and so increased the numbers in a particular class to a figure larger than the populaton recorded for that age cohort; (ii) up to 25% of these children were enrolled for the second time and actually should have been in class II or III; (iii) in most cases, the figures were inflated at least by about 20%.[260]

As Sattar rightly observed, the percentage distribution of children in schools makes clearer the significance of the 70% enrollment of the total primary school age children. There might indeed be an overall enrollment of 70% in schools but the majority were concentrated in the lower classes from which they later dropped out. Hence, this figure has little meaning in terms of the achievement of universal literacy.[261] As mentioned in a previous chapter, a minimum of four or more years of primary education on a regular basis was considered essential in attaining sustained literacy, therefore, for the attainment of

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[260] Ibid. p. 39.
[261] Ibid.

Table 5:5

Average Enrollment and Percentage Distribution of Enrollment Between classes I-V, 1980.

Class	Average Enrollment	Percentage Distribution
Class I	77	41.3
Class II	40	21.3
Class III	30	15.8
Class IV	23	12.1
Class V	18	9.4

Source: E. Sattar;*UPE in Bangladesh*,table 4.3 and 4.4, p. 38.

literacy and universal primary education, the class V enrollment was particularly significant. But, as Table 5:5 shows, the retention rate up to this level was very small.

The phenomenon of dropouts not only represented a serious waste of resources but also made planned educational targets difficult to achieve. Dropout occurred at all levels but was very high at the primary level, especially in class I and II.[262] The official figures of dropout were, as in the case of enrollment figures, not very reliable. The First Plan of Bangladesh estimated that the dropout ratio at the primary stage was 63 percent in 1973.[263] This probably meant that of all those who enrolled in class I in 1968, only 37% completed class V in 1973. Other sources indicated that in 1976 the retention rate of students at the primary school until class V was 30%, which meant that 70% dropped out before completion of the primary cycle[264], and, 58% dropped out immediately after the first year.[265] These figures did not seem to change even in 1980. Although this retention figure was larger than the figure in 1950 which was around 9%, still this increase had little effect on literacy, and the number of illiterates were increasing yearly.

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[262] See IER, *Survey on Primary Schools.*
[263] Bangladesh, *The First Plan*, p. 451.

The phenomenon of a high dropout rate is not unique to Bangladesh but is also characteristic of the majority of the LDCs. In the 1960s, the percentages of dropouts at the primary level in Asia, Africa and Latin America were 20.2%, 54.0% and 61.6% respectively.[266] This is, however, an overview of three regions, but within some countries such as Bangladesh the wastage is really severe.[267] A Study by Brimer and Pauli indicated that in Latin America during the 1950s and early 1960s dropout rates were extraordinarily high and on the average only a quarter of the children enrolled in grade I reached grade VI.[268]

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[264] DPI's Office Dacca, 1976, in Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 41.

[265] Unesco, *Bulletin on Education in Asia*, No. 20, 1979, p.24.

[266] J. Simmons (ed.)*The Educational Dilemma: Policies Issues for Developing Countries in the 1980s* (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1980), p. 46.

[267] In India and Pakistan for every 100 children, who enrolled in class I at the age of 5 or 6, many dropped out before reaching class II. Subsequently, the rate of dropouts is not very extreme, but on the average, only 20 students remained in grade V. See Curle, *Educational Problems of developing Societies* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1973), p. 51.

[268] M. A. Brimer and L. Pauli, *Wastage in Education: A World Problem* (Paris: IBE, 1971), p. 42.

Wastage in the education system also could occur if students, instead of dropping out altogether, attended school irregularly but were neverthertless retained on the school register. This problem of absenteeism was also closely related to dropout rates since students who were not attending school for long periods ultimately dropped out.

Similarly, repetition produced the same problems and while repeaters swelled the numbers in a class, their academic performance was not necessarily improved and they often dropped out from school. Repetition was mandatory if the children had poor attendance or performance records. The repetition rate varied among classes, e.g., while in class V 14% of students were repeating, in class I it was 23%. Repetition among girls were slightly higher than among boys in all classes at the primary level.[269] For the Third World regions, in the 1960s, the percentage of repeaters were 10.3%, 40.7% and 5.3% for Asia, Africa and Latin America respectively.[270]

Some of the main factors which were responsible for low enrollment at the primary level have already been noted briefly above. These were also relevant in explaining the phenomena of absenteeism, dropouts and repetition. The findings of a survey, carried out in two rural areas in the Dacca district of Bangladesh in 1970 by T. Islam, revealed that enrollment at the primary stage in a family depended mainly on family income and the occupation and level of education of the head of the family.[271] The cultivators' and handicraft workers' families had a markedly lower interest in enrolling their children in schools than those of traders and service holders. This was because the children of cultivators' and workers' families had to assist in the family occupation at an early age. Enrollment was also found to be markedly lower among the poorer families than among the economically better off. This was to be expected considering that children from poor families were likely to be chronically undernourished and thus in poor health and many of them were not able to afford the direct costs of education. Furthermore, the opportunity cost of education among children of the poor families was not considered negligible since such families had to mobilise every member of the household in their efforts to eke out a living. Islam also found that enrollment was markedly higher where the head of the family had some education himself.

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[269] IER, *Survey of Primary Schools*, p. 52.
[270] Simmons, *The Educational Dilemma*, p. 46.

Islam's findings received strong support from an Indian study which indicated that 40% of children aged 6-11 who were not attending school were working most of the time and about 65% of the children aged 11-14 were working full time. This study further revealed that a much higher percentage of girls than boys were working.[272]

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[271] Islam, *Social Justice and Educational System*, pp. 49-52.
[272] S. W. Sarat, "Continution of Part-time Education at the Elementary Stage", unpublished mimeo, cited in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 87.

Wastage in education was also influenced by the school environment. Schools were crowded, poorly lighted and poorly constructed. The teachers were often very didactic and dictatorial in a overcrowded situation. When there was only one teacher for 70 children especially in a lower grade that teacher could hardly teach, excepting by rote rote and by strict discipline. Also, teachers often lacked the basic understanding about child psychology and maintained order and discipline by punishment, which contributed to school dropout. It was difficult for children to learn under such conditions, and they became easily discouraged and consequently dropped out. The overall enrollment at the primary level was also kept low because of the low enrollment of girls which was about half the rate for boys as a proportion of the relevant age group population.

5.3.1.2 Qualitative Aspect of Primary Education

The qualitative aspect of primary education provides even a more frustrating picture. The quality of education largely depends on school factors, such as the curriculum, the instructional materials, the teachers, and the physical facilities available. In order to increase the quality of education at the primary level, it was essential to ensure that the schools were supplied with adequate educational facilities, teachers, relevant curriculum and all that these entailed. These should also be distributed equally among the various regions and segments of the population. In fact, the findings of a study conducted by Heyneman suggest that investment in such areas as better physical equipment, teachers and learning materials - the basic components of quality in schools - can be expected to affect the academic performance of school children in developing countries.[273]

Not only do external factors affect wastage, an education which is irrelevant to the needs of peoples' lives also facilitates repetition, dropouts and absenteeism. The majority of schools, especially those in the rural areas were able to offer only a low quality of schooling. The result was that primary school children, particulary those in the rural and marginal urban areas, had an unpleasant time at school. N. Bennett sketched a picture of a rural primary school child in a developing country by noting that:

> Typically, at the age of 5, 6 or 7 (legal age) the child will enroll in a primary school. It is likely that this school will be some distance from his home and that he will spend about seven hours in school, most of the time sitting in a crowded hot, ill-lit building. He will be taught by a teacher without much more than primary school education himself . At least half of the time will be spent on reading (reciting after the teacher), writing (copying from

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[273] S. P. Heyneman, "A Brief Note on the Relationship Between Socio-economic Status and Test Performance Among Ugandan School Children" in *Comparative Education Review*, Vol. 20, No. 1, 1976. However, it should be noted that Simmons and Alexander provided a different view about the determinants of student achievement. From their argument it appears that most of the school inputs which have traditionally been thought to be important, in fact, have no effect on achievement. They also found that home background or parental socio-economic status generally have a stronger influence on student performance in primary and lower secondary grades than the policy controlled schooling variables. See John Simmons and L. Alexander, "Factors which Promote School Achievement in Developing Countries" in Simmons, *The Education Dilemma*, pp. 77-95.

> the board) and arithmetic (copying and reciting)... There might also be some work on a school garden, and lectures and recitation in geography, history and general science.[274]

This is in really a description of the situation of Bangladesh. Therefore, as Dove points out with reference to Bangladesh, "children find school uninteresting and their teacher harsh. Poor parents see schooling as costly and irrelevant to the survival needs of the family".[275]

I) Facilities Available in Primary Schools:

Most of the primary schools were not soundly built. There were three types of structure: *pucca* which were bricks and cement; *katcha* which had bamboo or mud walls and a corrugated iron (C. I.) sheet roof with an earthen floor; and semi-*pucca* which could have C. I. sheet/*pucca*/mud walls, C. I. sheet roof or even a cement floor. Only 26% of all primary schools were *pucca*; 44% were *katcha*; and the remaining were semi-*pucca*.[276]

In rural areas, the schools were in a deplorable condition. Many of the semi-*pucca* schools had earth floors, and lacked sufficient doors and windows, a factor which made the schools totally unsafe. Less than one percent of the total government schools had been provided with electricity.[277] The *katcha* structures needed continuous repair if their condition was not to deteriorate rapidly. The strong storms and cyclones experienced in the coastal areas and the tornado type winds with rains often reduced all but *pucca* buildings to ruin.

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[274] N. Bennett, "Primary Education in Rural Communities - Investment in Ignorance?" in *Journal of Development Studies*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1970.

[275] Linda A. Dove, *Teacher Training for Universal Primary Education in Bangladesh 1981-6* University of London Institute of Education, (unpublished mimeo).

[276] National Foundation for Research on Human Resource Development (NFRHRD), *Primary Education Network in Bangladesh*, preliminary draft, (Dacca, 1979), mimeo, p. 25, in Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 29.

The school premises were generally inedaquate and unattractive for the children. The available number of benches and desks in primary schools was inadequate - they provided seating accomodation for about 50% of the children enrolled. On the average only one black-board per school in the rural areas was available as compared with five in the urban areas. Only 52% of the schools in the country had cupboards - 51% in the rural areas as compared with 71% in urban areas. The survey also revealed that most of the primary schools did not have adequate drinking water facilities, latrines and other basic amenities.[278] This was partly due to the fact that primary education had in the past been a residuary claimant of the resources in the educational budget and partly due to the faulty policy of the Government.[279]

In the urban areas, primary schools were usually better designed and equipped than those of the rural areas. They were more likely to be *pucca* and secure but they lacked playground facilities - which was a disadvantage for the urban children. However, other than this, the situation of the primary schools in the urban areas were always better than in the rural areas.

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[277] IER, *Survey on Primary Schools*, p. 84.
[278] See for detailed discussion and more data on available facilities IER, *The Survey on Primary Schools*, pp. 24-39.
[279] See for more on these points Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 94.

The single most distressing fact was that the capacity of the schools and their limited number made it impossible for them to enroll all the students who sought admission. About 87% of schools were unable to accommodate more than 150 students. In fact, as Sattar concluded the large dropout by the end of class I probably contributed to making the seating capacity bearable for the rest of the pupils.[280]

II) Teaching Aids, Curriculum and Text Books:

Many primary schools lacked proper instructional materials and simple teaching aids. Small scale private enterprises had been producing limited quantities of school items of poor quality such as slates, exercise books and pencils. Attempts were made to produce other materials or teaching aids, e.g., blackboards, pictures, word cards, blocks, simple specimens and equipment for nature study and practical courses. Unicef has supplied teaching aids for primary schools since the inception of Bangladesh, but supplies have not been adequate. Besides, it is unrealistic to take it for granted that this supply could continue indefinitely. Although a small Education Equipment and Development Bureau had been in existence for some time, it was established mainly to meet the requirements of secondary schools for equipment, especially science laboratory equipment.[281]

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[280] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, pp. 30-31.

Another important aspect of the quality of education is the relevance of what is taught - relevance to the needs of the child in his later life. In Bangladesh the content of education is irrelevant to the social, economic and cultural context of the country and the students concerned.[282] The curriculum materials and textbooks at the primary level were generally unimaginative, outdated, concentrated on book learning and lacked relevance for the future life of the child. The report of the Bangladesh Education Commission reiterated that the basic objective of primary education was the proper development of children's "moral, mental, physical and social responsibility" which was in line with the overall objectives of the country. It was recommended that a complete overhauling of the curriculum of primary education should be undertaken so as to "harmonise it with the environment of the children's daily lives, needs of society, the mental and physical capability of students and their aptitudes".[283] The commission further recommended that the curriculum should be made interesting, and, apart from teaching the three R's, strong emphasis should be placed on environmental studies, music, art and crafts, games and recreation and agriculture. As a result, a Committee on Curriculum and Courses of Study was established and it submitted the first part of its report on primary education in December 1976. The Report provided detailed recommendations on subjects to be taught in each class, the curriculum for each subject, the duration of each course and the method of instruction. It also provided guidelines for the preparation of text books and the use of requisite teaching aids.[284]

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[281] Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 95.

[282] As Beeby observed, in most of the LDCs in Asia and Africa, curriculum and educational objectives suited England and France of half a century ago more than the need of an emergent country today. See C. E. Beeby, *The Quality of Education in Developing Countries* (Cambridge: Harvard University press, 1966), p. 31.

[283] Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, *Report of the Bangladesh Education Commission*, p. 25, cited in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 96.

However, the curriculum changes which occurred were very marginal. As Sattar reported, in most primary schools children did not receive lessons in music or in anything even similar to arts and crafts. Physical education was rare. A small fraction of the schools offered vegetable gardening through the initiative of individual teachers.[285] In fact, no changes were implemented along the line of objectives stated in the Education Commission report. The system continued to follow the traditional way of preparing students for moving up to the next step of the educational ladder. Thus, primary schools continued to strive towards getting their students into secondary schools and from these institutions into higher educational institutons, into which the majority could not enter.

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[284] See for detailed recommendations, The Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, *Jatio Shikhakrama O' Pathyashuchi Pranayan Committee(Committee on Curriculum and Courses Study)*.

[285] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 47.

Further, the method of learning was by rote memorization. In examinations, the children had to reproduce the book and the teacher's notes; individual thinking was hardly emphasised. Rote learning was actually encouraged by the examination system. Students even tried to memorize the solutions to arithmetic problems in order to pass the examination. The main objective of education was not learning but rather to get a certificate to enter into the next level of education. This is, however, true for the whole educational system, not only in Bangladesh but also in many Third World countries. It ultimately creates a craze for certificates - the "diploma disease" as Dore calls it.[286] As a matter of fact, the educational system is usually designed to prepare students for higher education, which qualified one for entry into the lucrative jobs in the modern sector of the economy. Since only a small fraction of the total population could enter into this sector, the system neglected to provide relevant education for the majority of the people at the primary level.

The value of the examination system for such a young age is highly questionable. However, the Bangladesh Education Commission was of the opinion that the absence of external examination (which was previously held at the end of classes V and VIII only) was one of the major reasons for the deterioration of standards in primary schools.

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[286] Dore, *The Diploma Disease.*

Although the system of internal examinations, which were held periodically, was in existence in every school, these were, according to the Commission, ineffective.[287] However, it should be understood that the examination systems at the primary level mainly increased the use of rote learning among students rather than helping them to acquire any useful knowledge and skills. Also, it had a devastating effect on the self image of the child who failed the examinations.

III) Teacher Education:

The sucess of the school system also depends largely on the teachers. Teachers must be well motivated, well trained and have the necessary academic preparation and ability for their work. The quality of the teachers is therefore, directly reflected in the effects of teaching. The lack of suitable qualified teachers is one of the problems of the educational system of Bangladesh, especially in the rural areas.

In 1981, 154,277 teachers were working in 36,665 government primary schools. Of these, 11,924 i.e., about 7.7% were female. About 70% of the total number had received some form of professional training. Unrecognized schools had a complement of 31,867 teachers, of whom 21% were trained.[288] The overall percentage of trained teachers decreased during the late 1972.[289]

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[287] Bangladesh, *Education Commission Report*, p. 167, cited in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 103.
[288] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 58.

These statistics disguise the wide variations in the educational qualifications and the quality of the training of teachers. The typical primary school teacher in Bangladesh had a Secondary School Certificate (S.S.C) acquired after 10 years of general education, but did not necessarily have any professional training.[290] About 9% of all government primary school teachers had not passed S. S. C. examinations.[291] There were also teachers who had neither a S. S. C. certificate nor any professional training. Some in this category were given a short course of training. Although the official goal for the qualification of primary teachers was an S. S. C. certificate plus a year of professional training, this was only realized in the cases of Head Teachers and Assistant Head Teachers in the primary schools. The prescribed duration of schooling for a primary school teacher in Bangladesh (11 years) was about the same as in most states in India. However, in India a primary school teacher must have a preservice professional training of two years after completing a minimum of eight years' schooling, or preferably hold a Matriculation Certificate. In Cuba, where development in mass education was quite dramatic in recent years, they recruited primary school trainees with six years of schooling and gave them an intensive training for five years in general as well as pedagogical subjects including practice in teaching.[292]

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[289] See Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 100. It was about 50% in government schools.
[290] It should be noted that there were many teachers who did not have proper certificates but were very qualified in terms of their teaching. However, the number of such teachers were few.
[291] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 58.

Training: The responsibility of providing professional education to primary school teachers rested with the Primary Training Institutes (PTI). There were only 47 PTIs in the country by 1980, and none were built after 1972 despite the proposal in the First Five Year Plan to build 15 more. Many of the existing PTIs were in a poor state of repair: the buildings were small with tin roofs and inadequate hostel accommodation.[293]

In 1978 there were 7,139 students in the various PTIs of whom 21% were female.[294] However, one of the PTIs provided training exclusively for females. Eighty percent of the students selected were already teaching in primary schools; the remaining 20% were students who intended to go into teaching for the first time. As a result of the very limited facilities for study and accommodation, the PTI could accept only 100 students at a time.[295]

The courses offered by these institutions were meant for pre-service teachers, though over the years the same courses have also been offered to in-service teachers.

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[292] IER, *An Evaluation of Curricula of Teacher Education Programmes of Bangladesh* (Dacca: IER, 1976), p. 224, in Husain, *Educational Reform*, pp. 99-100.
[293] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 59.
[294] Ibid.
[295] Unesco, APEID, *In-Service Teacher Education: developing innovatory strategies and instructional materials*, Report of a Study Group, (Bangkok: Unesco, 1980), p. 1.

Several other institutions offered short-term in-service primary teacher education. The Bangladesh Educational Extension and Research Institute (BEERI) is concerned only with in-service education. It provides training to all types of personnel - inspectors, subject teachers for primary and secondary schools, college professors and headmasters.[296] The Refresher Course Training Centres (RCTC) offer two-month refresher courses to primary school teachers. The Institute of Education and Research (IER) of Dacca University has started conducting research and in-service education courses in the field of primary education. In addition, the Audio-visual Education Centre attached to BEERI offers special in-service training for different categories of teachers (including primary school teachers), on the use and development of indigenous audio-visual educational materials and teaching aids.[297]

The Academy of Fundamental Education (AFE) was established in 1978, the objective being to give professional training to the primary training institute staff, primary school inspectors and administrators, and others involved in organizing teacher training programs. The Academy also provided the necessary link between curriculum development and other related activities in the primary education sector, the PTIs and the inspectorate.[298]

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[296] Unesco, APEID, *In-Service Teacher Education*, p. 1.

[297] Unesco, APEID, *In-Service Primary Teacher Education* (Bangkok: Unesco, 1980), p. 5.

Working Conditions: The work load and condition of the teachers varied according to class size and the types of schools. The teacher:student ratio was very high in the lower classes, ranging from 1:60 up to 1:100 in class I. In class V, it falls as low as to 1:12 or 1:8 in remote rural schools largely due to the drop out rate before class V is reached. In the disadvantaged areas the ratios is even lower as fewer students enroll and continue up to class V.[299] Even apart from this teacher-student ratio, working conditions vary considerably. For example, there is great difference between the teachers' working conditions in the urban schools and the rural non-government schools. In the former, teachers are well paid and work in good conditions, while in the rural non-recognized schools, the pay is less and conditions are harsher.

It should be noted that the main factor which hampered the recruitment of able persons to primary school teaching in Bangladesh was the very low salary paid to teachers in the past. Until recently, the majority of the teachers received a wage which was in fact lower than that of urban unskilled workers. During the 1970s, the minimum salary of a fully qualified primary school teacher (S.S.C. with C.Ed.) was more than three times the average GDP in Bangladesh.[300]

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[298] Ibid.

[299] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 62.

[300] The per capita GDP in 1975 was Taka 709 while the minimum salary of trained primary school teacher was TK. 2,640, see Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 102,231.

However, the dissatisfaction among primary school teachers was due more to the relative rates of their remuneration vis-a-vis the higher public employees than the absolute levels of their own remuneration.[301]

IV) Innovative Measures:

To improve the educational situation, especially at the primary level, two innovative programs were undertaken on a pilot project basis. These were: i) the Muktangan School (open air school); and ii) the Meher Universal Primary Education Project.

i) **The Muktangan Experiment**: While the Curriculum Committee was at work, the new thinking on primary education had already been tried out on a pilot project basis in 500 primary schools involving about 2500 teachers and more than 100,000 pupils. The project was introduced by the Ministry of Education in collaboration with the Institute of Education and Research of Dacca University in the year 1976. The objective of this scheme was to make education attractive to the children of primary schools through learning from their own environment.[302]

A curriculum was designed and the training of teachers undertaken. Provisions for agriculture, village survey, handwork, environmental studies, knowledge of local institutions (i.e., marketing, cooperative, union council, etc.) and practical participation in rural development projects were included in the course of study.[303] One third of the course work was devoted to practical courses as mentioned, while two-thirds of the course consisted of book learning leading to literacy, numeracy and acquisition of essential knowledge. The courses were carefully designed according to the age of the children. Detailed guidelines were provided for teachers with room for considerable flexibility in the curriculum allowing the teachers to take into account local problems and situations.[304] The project tried to integrate both the aspects of formal and non-formal education.[305]

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[301] Ibid., p. 102.

[302] Commonwealth Secretariat, *Universal Primary Education in Asia and Pacific*, *Report of Commonwealth Regional Seminar*, Bangladesh, 3-14 December, 1979, p. 47.

A short intensive course of training in the new methods was given in 12 Primary Training Institutes to groups of teachers who should have already had a Certificate of training. There was a weekly educational program on the radio which was directed especially to the Muktangan teachers.[306]

The major objectives of the project were:

1. to make primary education interesting and attractive to young students through relating their learning to the

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[303] Government of Bangladesh, Ministry of Education, *Bangladesh Parikhamulak Muktangan Prathamik Shikhya (Experimental Open Air Primary Education in Bangladesh), December, 1975, p. 1, cited in Husain, Educational Reform*, p. 96.

[304] Ibid., p. 97.

[305] See M. K. Choudhury and A. K. M. Obaidullah, *Outdoor Primary Education in Bangladesh* (Paris: Unesco, 1980), p. 22.

[306] Ibid.

environment in which they lived. The aim was to reduce the large dropout rate which was being experienced by most schools.

2. to provide a realistic and practical education for primary school children so that they could grow up as useful and productive members of the society.[307]

The project was conducted over a period of three months and although it created general interest among the pupils, teachers and members of the community, Choudhury and Obaidullah concluded from their evaluation that it was not possible to assert that the objectives were fully achieved.[308]

ii) **Meher Union UPE Project:** The Ministry of Education also had a pilot scheme entitled "Universal Primary Education in Meher Union, Comilla", which was implemented by the Bangladesh Association for Community Education. Under this scheme, 22 feeder schools with a preschool, class I and some class II students had been established around the existing eight primary schools of Meher Union. By agreement, the existing primary schools in the area did not accept class I children but instead, these children were admitted to the feeder schools. Meher UPE used a non-formal approach, as Sattar noted, "to supplement the formal inadequate education system. The feeder schools are in no way an alternative to the formal system, they are a supplement to it".[309]

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[307] Ibid., p. 13.

[308] See for detailed discussion on these points ibid., p. 35.

However, the project was not able to prevent dropout, especially among the children from poorer families. Repetition had not been entirely eliminated and students were still very crowded in the lower grades.[310] But there was an improvement in the retention rate in the Meher Union. A recent independent survey on the project indicated a 43% dropout up to class V.[311] This was an improvement over the national figure of 70% dropout. Meher Union also had a 100% cohort enrollment in contrast to the national cohort of around 60%.[312]

These innovative measures indicated that some efforts were being made to find a more effective way of achieving UPE, but they were not introduced throughout the country. Several other new experiments suggested by the First Plan which could have at least increased the primary school output, such as multiple shifts in schools to economize the cost of education, were not undertaken.[313] Further, there was no provision made to change the socio-economic structure of the country and without this it is very unlikely that the broad educational goals can be achieved.

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[309] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 97.

[310] Class and grade is used to mean the same thing.

[311] M. Huque, et. al., *An Evaluation of the Meher Panchagram UPE Pilot Project*, (Dacca, 1980), in Sattar, Ibid., p.100. Sattar provides an elaborate picture on the project.

[312] Ibid.

[313] Islam, *Development Planning*, p. 132.

5.3.2 Out of School Factors

The out of school factors which affected the achievement of UPE by 1980 were social, economic and political. It was already observed that slow growth in the economy and the constant political instability of the country were largely responsible for underachievement of UPE. The situation was further aggravated by natural disasters and population growth.

Further, the massive poverty among the masses impeded the goal of UPE by 1980. In Bangladesh, as in almost all other societies, there is a marked influence of social class, even at the level of primary education on the availability of facilities. The rich and educated people ensure that educational facilities are available for their children, while vast numbers of the poor and illiterate of the society hardly have access to such facilities even when education at this level is free. This may be partly explained by the fact that other costs of education which are still to be privately borne often prove too heavy for the poorer families to bear. These other costs which the students are required to meet are: 1) the direct cost, such as the cost of extra clothes; books; stationary and travel, etc., 2) opportunity cost[314] of their labor which would ordinarily be spent on keeping the farm. Poorer families were unable to bear these costs and, therefore, their children could not enroll at all, or even if they enrolled in the beginning, they are the ones who dropped out eventually.

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[314] Cost arising out of foregoing earning opportunity by attending schools.

In other words, the children of the socio-economically advantaged groups go to schools, and the disadvantaged ones work for basic necessities. On the other hand, the rich people continued to send their children to attend better schools both in urban and rural areas and could even afford to appoint private tutors for their children. The wealthy can easily forgo the childrens' labor but the poor cannot even if the books are free and the school day consists of two or three hour shifts.[315] In the villages where the literacy level might be over 50%, such education attainment is usually confined to the well off families. The poorer families remain uneducated with literacy levels worse than the national average.[316]

Again, while the poorer families cannot send all their children to school they become more selective and reluctant about providing for their daughters' education. It was observed that the poorer families were generally more conservative in their outlook and - therefore prevented the girls from going to schools. Thus, girls who comprised half of the primary school age children did not have enough opportunity to go to school - and contributed to underachievement of UPE by 1980. The attempt of UPE was a step in the right direction but there was need for other efforts outside the school system to ensure that it was achieved.

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[315] In fact, in large urban cities some elite schools have a regulation that unless the parents contribute a large sum of money to schools, they would not enroll the children. Therefore, only children of the rich socio-economic background could go to these schools.

[316] National Foundation for Research on Human Resource Development (NFRHRD), *The Ulashi Villages*, (Dacca:NFRHRD, 1978), pp. 14-15, 56, in Satter, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 22.

5.3.3 The Major Factor: Influence of Domestic Elites

The foregoing analyses revealed that the failure to achieve UPE by 1980 was caused by two contributory factors: the external factors such as after war effects, political instability, population growth, poor economic condition of the parents and so on; and school-related factors such as the inefficiency - both qualitative and quantitative - within the educational system itself. But the crucial question arises as to why there was inefficiency in the education system, especially at the primary level? The explanation lies in the fact that the upper and middle class parents wanted a certain type of education for their children which would prepare them to climb the next step of the educational ladder. So primary schools were organized to provide the type of education which will get the children to the secondary schools which in turn were geared to the universities. Bacchus expressed the same view in the case of other developing countries when he stated that the "distorting influence which the universities exert on the whole educational system persists despite the fact that often not more than 1% of the students who initially enter primary schools even end up at universities".[317]

On the other hand, there was no great effort made to provide the type of knowledge and skills needed by the majority of the students who entered primary schools and were likely to end up earning their living from the traditional low wage sector. The sources of inefficiency in the primary education system were previously mentioned. But it cannot be denied that this situation occurred because the education system was controlled by the same group of people who controlled the means of production and the state apparatus. This small group of people always made the decisions about who gets what. This, perhaps, also explains why there are rich and poor and why poor children in Bangladesh cannot even complete the primary school course.

Therefore, the most important factor which contributed towards the underexpansion of the primary education sector was the influence of the domestic elites, who, as was previously mentioned, preferred the expansion of the secondary and tertiary levels of education at the expense of the primary education.

However, it was not only the elites who wanted to expand the secondary and higher levels of education. There were also the rising middle class and upwardly aspiring working class groups from the urban centres, who had strong influence in the descision making process. These latter groups viewed educaton as the only means of providing their children with an opportunity for upward mobility through a relatively highly rewarding modern sector job. Since the modern sector jobs required individuals with certain levels of education, the demand for secondary and tertiary levels continued strongly and were met at the cost of primary education for the masses. While the ultimate descision rested on the highest descision making body, the Government and its highest bureaucrates, the pressure of the middle class and upper class could not be over-emphasized since the elected Government had to depend largely on the political support of these groups. Therefore, secondary and higher levels of education expanded far beyond the expected target of the Government. Even when resources were allocated for primary education, these were always underspent, while the allocations for higher education were always overspent.

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[317] Bacchus, "Education for Development in Underdeveloped Countries".

5.3.4 Place of Primary Education in the Educational Planning

If one examines the enrollment targets set for the expansion of education and the resource allocation made for different levels and types of education in the First Plan, one will get some ideas of the educational priorities that were established when the Plan was first drawn up.[318]

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[318] The methodology followed in the preparation of the plan on education was one of trend analysis. This was evident in the setting up of the targets and suggestions regarding the programs. Trends in the past were examined and targets of future educational expansion were set on the basis of

[318] The Plan envisaged an expansion of enrollment at the primary level by 43%, at the secondary level by 57%, at the college level by 52% and at the university level by 63%. Teacher education was to be expanded by a hefty 150% and technical education by 172% over the plan period. Table 5:6 indicates the targets of the First Plan of Bangladesh in the field of education and training.

In terms of financial allocation, the percentage of development funds earmarked for primary education in the Plan was 16.5% of the total against 17.1% for secondary, 7.1% for college, 10.0% for university education, 4.6% for teacher education and 14.3% for technical education. These figures can be seen in Table 5:7.

In the Plan, both college and university education together were allocated significantly more resources than primary education, which was quite contrary to the observation made in the introductory paragraphs which stated that during the Pakistan period too much emphasis was given to higher education at the expense of primary education.[319] Despite all the criticism made in the Plan about the past educational strategies, the First Plan of Bangladesh followed the old elitist model in its allocation of

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[318] (cont'd)desirability in the light of over-all objectives, feasibility and the so-called "social demand" for education. See for the discussion on this point Husain, *Educational Reform*, pp. 55-69. Therefore, it can be observed that the First Plan of Bangladesh followed almost a similar pattern as the Plans of Pakistan.

[319] See the introductory paragraphs of the chapter on Education and Manpower, Bangladesh, *The First Plan*, p. 441.

Table 5:6

Targets for Different Levels of Education in the First Five Year Plan of Bangladesh, in lakh and Percentage.

Levels	Stock in June, 1972	Stock in July, 1978	Percentage increase	Percent of total student enrollment	Percentage of the age group
Primary	60.00	85.95	43	72.4	73
Secondary	17.00	26.62	57	22.5	23.5
Teacher Education	0.10	0.25	150	0.2	
College	3.28	5.00	52	4.2	
Technical Education	0.18	0.49	172	0.4	
Universities	0.24	0.39	63	0.3	

Source: Bangladesh, *First Five Year Plan*, p. 450.

resources to the education sector. Therefore, it became impossible to achieve the goal of UPE by 1980 which was a major ambition of the country.

But, the First Plan of Bangladesh did give a higher priority to the education sector in terms of resource allocation than the Plans of Pakistan. This was largely because investment in education as in the other social sectors in Bangladesh's First Plan was decided "exogenously", i.e., on the basis of socio-political consideration.[320] Therefore, while during the Pakistan period the education sector received 5% to 6% of the public sector development allocations, it was 8% in the First Plan of Bangladesh.[321]

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[320] As N. Islam pointed out that the knowledge about the input-output coefficients involved was very little. For example, there was no analysis of manpower requirements by skills for different levels of output and final demand. See Islam, *Development Planning*, p. 86.

A short-fall in resources, however, developed quite early in the Plan due to unsatisfactory economic progress, unexpected increases in current expenditure and other factors such as deterioration in the country's international terms of trade and reduction in the flow of external assistance below projected levels.[322] Thus, although 3,160 million taka were allocated for the educational sector in the First Plan, only 300 million taka or less than 10% of the total allocation were spent in the first two years of the plan. For the last three years of the five year period, a hard-core plan was prepared amounting to Taka 1700 million only. This allocated 17.7% of the total funds to primary education, 14.7% to secondary and 5.9% to teacher education. The share reserved for college education was 10.6%, for university education 18.2% and for technical education 11.8%.[323] Ironically, with the short fall of resources college and university levels of education had even received a greater proportion of resources than before. On the other hand, allocation for non-formal education was reduced to half the previous amount on a proportional basis.[324]

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[321] Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 59.
[322] See on these points Islam, *Development Planning*, pp. 121-126.
[323] See Table 5:7.
[324] Husain, *Educataional Reform*, p. 60.

Table 5:7

Public Sector Development Allocation for Education and Training in Bangladesh in the First Plan (1973-78).
(million Takas)

Levels	First Plan		Hard Core Program	
	Allocaton	Percent	Allocation	Percent
Primary	577.22	16.50	300.00	17.65
Secondary	598.80	17.11	250.00	14.70
College	247.00	7.06	180.00	10.59
Universities	350.00	10.00	310.00	18.24
Teacher Ed.	160.00	4.57	100.00	5.88
Madrasah Ed.	10.00	0.28	10.00	0.59
Scholarships	140.00	4.00	100.00	5.88
Social and Cultural Activities (including Libraries)	150.00	4.29	75.00	4.41
Special	766.98*	22.00	175.00	10.29
	3500.00	100.00	1700.00	100.00

Source: For First Five Year allocation data are taken from the First Five Year Plan and they are also in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 265.
For Hard core program they are taken from Husain, ibid.

*Includes an allocation of Tk.400 million for non-formal education and Tk.276.98 for labor welfare and training.

Again, the major objectives of the First Plan, even when followed by the Two Year Plan of 1978-80, had not been realized at the primary level. During the periods of the two plans which lasted from 1973 to 1980, the universities were allocated a total of 571 million takas, but the actual expenditures on them was more than 119% of that figure - i.e., 683 million Takas. By contrast, primary education was allocated a total of 800 million but spent a mere 42% of the total -only 341 million takas.[325] If one considers the differences in the number of students and institutions involved - these allocations represent an extraordinary misallocation. This shows that in spite of all the rhetoric of the Government about education for the masses, the universities which provided education for the elites have been favored, indicating that a pattern similar to that followed during the four plan periods of Pakistan was being pursued.

Husain pointed out that there was little information in the "Annual Plans" of the Government of Bangladesh beyond the actual expenditure to be made in the sector in the following year. Even an estimate of the actual expenditure for the previous year by total and by sub-sectors was lacking. Therefore, on the basis of partial data, Husain concluded that the total development expenditure on education over the Plan period (1973-78) hardly amounted to a third of the original allocations. Also, very little information about the actual achievement of targets was provided, except some progress in the construction of buildings with some information on what was expected in the following year.[326] Sometimes information or anticipated increase of enrollment at different levels of education was provided and often the rates were indicated in such a way that one suspects that there was always an upward bias in the estimate of enrollment at the primary level and a downward bias in the estimates of enrollments at the college and university levels.[327]

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[325] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh* p.85.
[326] Husain, *Educational Reform* p. 60.

It was stated that originally when the Plan was being prepared, only a limited growth in the enrollment in the colleges and universities was proposed, especially in the field of liberal arts and humanities. However, concessions had to be made to political pressures and the targets set for this level of education were substantially revised upwards, despite the fact that according to the Plan the expansion of university education provided for was already considered excessive. The result was that in the course of the implementation of the Plan, the rate of expansion at the university level was accelerated far above the target originally set. It was reported that in the first year of the plan period alone the entire target for the five-year period was achieved.[328]

Furthermore, it was decided to finance the entire cost of the privately funded colleges, many of which were liberal arts or general science colleges and which were previously only partially financed by the Government. This decision was another important step towards the further expansion of public expenditure on higher education.[329]

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[327] Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh, *Economic Development in 1973-74 and Annual Plan for 1974-75*, (Dacca: 1974), p. 270, in ibid.

[328] N. Islam, *Development Planning*, pp. 131-132. But according to Husain this observation of Islam is not very accurate. See Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 223.

Therefore, the years since independence have seen remarkable growth in general university[330] enrollment. The growth rate was almost 25% during 1970-73 as compared to 10% and 18% during 1960-65 and 1965-70 respectively.[331] While there was no such data available for secondary and primary levels of education for the same period, some other studies indicate that while between 1960-61 and 1974-75 enrollment at the primary level increased at a compound rate of 6.7% per annum, enrollment at the secondary level showed a growth of 11.2% and at the higher secondary and college levels it was 15.2%. For the same period, enrollment in the universities increased by 15.8%
per annum.[332]

An important point is that in Bangladesh higher education, especially university education, is highly subsidized and the extent of subsidy had been increasing over time. Government Grants-in-Aid to the general universities as a percentage of university total revenue had increased to 82% in 1972-73 from 53% in 1960-61; there was a corresponding decline in the percentage contribution of student fees to 15% in 1972-73 from 37% in 1960-61. Public subsidy had been remarkably higher for the Engineering university (95% in 1972-73) and Agricultural University (86% in 1972-73). Only 2% of the recurring expenditures of the Engineering and Agricultural Universities in 1972-73 was financed by student fees. Further, on a net basis, the contribution of a student towards financing university education would range from zero to negative if inflows from students (student fees) were adjusted for expenditure on scholarships and stipends. It should be noted that almost 3% of the university current budget was disbursed on scholarships and stipends. This pattern of subsidizing university education in Bangladesh was quite striking if one compares it with some other countries. For example, in the U. S. A. students fees amounted to 22% of university income, 27% in Canada, 20% in Columbia and 8% in the U.K. during the 1960s.[333]

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[329] N. Islam, *Development Planning*, p. 132.

[330] Excluding college education and other technical university.

[331] T. Islam, *An Analysis of Public Recurring Expenditure of Higher Education in Bangladesh* (Dacca: University Grants' Commission, 1975), p. 17.

[332] Husain, *Educational Reform*, table IV and V.

Public expenditure on higher education was justified by the general argument that it ensured equality of opportunity to all social classes by permitting all able and talented persons of whatever social background to rise in the social ladder. In fact, evidence shows that subsidy to higher education generally benefited students from middle and upper income groups who had the easiest access to higher education.[334]

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[333] T. Islam, *An Analysis of Public Expenditure*, pp. xv, 83. For detailed discussion see chapter VII, ibid.

[334] The findings of T. Islam's study indicated that most of the students came from families where the parents/guardians income was 10 thousand taka. But about 56% of the total students came from middle and upper middle income groups (income 10,000 to 50,000 per annum). Further, the majority

[334] And the dominant group quite effectively used an allegedly "meritocratic" educational system to reproduce from generation to generation their high representation in the most lucrative jobs.[335] Therefore, financing higher education generously favored those from the upper social strata at the expense of the poorer in an emerging country such as Bangladesh.[336]

Consequently, the children from the lower income groups could not enroll even at the lower level of the educational system and if they did enroll many dropped out before completing the cycle. Myrdal made the same observation in the case of South Asian countries in general: "Generally children from the most disadvantaged families are less well represented" in the educational system.[337] Even at the "early stage of education, a severe process of selection is at work, which, on the whole, excludes the less priviliged population groups"[338] from the education system. Similarly, as Mahalanobis observed in his writing about India where some of the characteristics of selection to university are not very dissimilar from Bangladesh, " the process of selection, on the basis of income of the parents, continues at all levels of higher education. ...By and large, it is rich people who have the opportunity of giving their children the type of education required for posts of influence and responsibility in the country".[339] Naik similarly pointed out that "Educational development particularly at the secondary and higher stages, is benefiting 'haves' more than 'have-nots'. This is a negation of social justice...".[340]

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[334] (cont'd)of the students came from families where the head of the families' main source of occupation was non-agriculture. See ibid., chapter V.

[335] See for detailed discussion on how the dominant group use the "meritocratic hypothesis" to reproduce their own position both in LDCs and MDCs Carnoy, *Cultural Imperialism*; "Education for Alternative Development"(mimeo), Stanford University, 1980; Bowles and Gintis, *Schooling in Capitalist America*. This was also true for Bangladesh.

[336] See for this point T. Islam, *Social Justice and the Education System of Bangladesh* (Dacca: Bureau of Economic Research, University of Dacca, 1975).

[337] Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama - An Inquiry Into the Poverty of Nations* (Great Britain: Penguin Books, 1966), p. 1799.

[338] Ibid.

In Bangladesh, though the majority of the population was not provided with minimum basic education, still emphasis on the expansion of secondary and higher levels of education has continued into the 1970s. On the other hand, although primary education was nationalized in 1973, it did not receive any real attention and while its financial allocation was consistently underspent, those of the universities were always overspent.[341]

In practice, therefore, there were no deliberate efforts to achieve the stated objectives of the Plans. This is also true of most developing countries. For example, the Karachi, Addis Ababa and the Santiago conferences set their targets for achieving UPE by certain dated as discussed in an earlier chapter. In 1979, four years beyond the target dates, half the countries of Asia and Latin America had not achieved UPE. The situation of African countries was even worse. Of 46 African countries, only 6 so far had achieved UPE by 1978. The rates of progress were so slow that, as Blaug pridicted, UPE will not be achieved even by the year 2000.[342]

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[339] P. C. Mahalanobis, "Next Step in Planning", *Sankhya: The Indian Journal of Statistics*, Vol 22, Parts 1 and 2, January 1960, p. 153, in ibid. p. 1800.

[340] J. P. Naik, *Educational Planning in India*, p. 22, in ibid.

[341] Government of People's Republic of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, *Second Five Year Plan of Bangladesh (Draft) 1980-85*, 1980, XVI-1-2, in Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 82.

On the other hand, all these conferences also laid down targets for the expansion of secondary and tertiary levels of education. In many Third World countries, these targets have been exceeded even before the target dates.[343]

However, much of what happened in the educational system in Bangladesh was not the result of a lack of financial resources or of inefficiency in the educational system itself in particular, as many of the educationists, social scientists and the planners believe. The educational system was hierarchically structured as was society and therefore class biased. The powerful elite group in Bangladesh, as in other developing countries, dominated and exploited the masses for their own interests and there was little or no effort made to eliminate the inequalities in the society. Education was in fact being used to perpetuate and increase the existing inequalities. As a result, poverty persists and inequalities and injustice remain the cruel reality of an increasing number of impoverished individuals especially in the rural areas.

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[342] M. Blaug , "The Case for UPE" in R. Smith, *Universal Primary Education*, p. 5.
[343] Ibid.

6. CONCLUSION

It was observed in the previous chapters that the target of UPE was not achieved by 1980. The failure was reflected not only in quantitative terms but also in qualitative ones. A central concern of this study was to identify the causes of the failure of the Government of Bangladesh to achieve UPE. It was obvious from the analyses in Chapter 5 that a number of factors were responsible for the underdevelopment of primary education. These factors were: population growth, the after effects of the war, political instability, poverty or poor socio-economic background of the students and the qualitative and quantitative inefficiency within the school system. Some of these factors in fact were the legacy of the pre-independence period, others were the result of the policy of the present Government.

However, by far the most important single factor which reinforced the failure to achieve UPE was the influence of the local elites - the preference for the expansion of secondary and tertiary levels of education, despite the repeated pronouncements about the importance of UPE for the masses. Although characterized by the Government as "elitist and formal" and "disproportionately" costly, secondary and post-secondary institutions have been by far the fastest growing sectors of the educational establishment - at the expense of primary education. In fact, from 1947 to 1980 there was no congruence between the nation's professed commitment to education for the masses and its actual achievements in resource allocation and plan implementation in this field.

In a country where the literacy rate of the population was almost the lowest in the world, the over-expansion of secondary and tertiary levels of education simply reflected the elitist structure of the society. The social structure of Bangladesh was marked by not only sharp social class distinctions, but also caste-like-hierarchical features. The dominant groups who controlled the state apparatus and means of production used education to reproduce their socio-economic and political position and solidify their grasp or influence on the political machinery of the country. Therefore, instead of being a "great equalizer", the education system in Bangladesh, as in many Third World countries, acted to increase rather than decrease socio-economic inequalities and to reproduce the existing class relations in the society.

In addition to the influence of the elites, the failure to realize the goals of UPE and rural development was also affected by the increasing pressures from the rising middle class groups who were also demanding better educational facilities and modern sector job opportunities. One of the consequences of the influence of such pressure groups was that disproportionately large amounts of public resources were invested in urban development and higher levels of education at the cost of the rural development and education for the masses.

The major reason for the pressure exerted by these groups for an expansion of secondary and higher education was that students' income earning prospects through modern sector employment were considerably higher with a secondary or tertiary educational qualification than with primary schooling only. The demand for higher levels of education therefore, in reality, was a demand for better employment opportunities in the modern sector which not only offered lucrative wages but also enhanced the prestige and status of those who had acquired such jobs.

However, one can argue that expansion of education should not be interpreted from a purely economic angle, because it also has some intrinsic value, which influences the demand for it. But, in a country such as Bangladesh where survival is the major concern for most of the people, not many were guided by the argument of the "intrinsic value of education". It is, therefore, unlikely that there was a substantial demand for education just for pure consumption. Further, many perceived that educational demand was related to a demand for status and prestige, which in reality derived from the economic opportunities opened up by education.

In fact, status and prestige are closely related to class, status and the power of individual groups and these usually overlap. Therefore, employment in a high wage sector was the main factor which influenced the demand of secondary and higher education. This in turn maintained social inequality between "haves" and "have-nots". In Bangladesh, access into public and private modern sector jobs was predicated upon successful completion of the requisite years of education associated with particular jobs, without much consideration as to whether such education requirements were really necessary for satisfactory job performance. As Blaug pointed out, "employers prefer the more highly educated person for job, whether or not the qualifications are necessary for efficient job performance. Hence students are motivated to acquire extra education in order to compete better in the rat race...".[344]

If one considers the wage structure of the economy of the country, then it will be easy to perceive why there was a great demand for modern sector jobs and hence for secondary and tertiary levels of education. In fact, almost all the developing countries are marked by a dualistic structure of the economy comprising of a modern and a traditional sector. The most striking feature of this dualism is the great income disparities between the workers and laborers in these two sectors. For example, a comparison of the ratio of income of secondary school teachers in some developing countries to GNP per capita will provide some more ideas of the income disparities. The ratios were 15.1:1

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[344] M. Blaug, "Common Assumptions About Education and Employment", in Simmons, *The Education Dilemmas*, pp. 145-152.

in Burma (1962), 14.0:1 in Ghana (1961), 7.8:1 in Pakistan (1962) as compared with 3.0:1 in the United Kingdom (1964).[345] This indicates that earning differentials in developing countries are excessive by international standards. There were no figures available on Bangladesh, but a study of relative wage and salary structure in the former East Pakistan provided statistics on earnings of graduates of different levels of education. These figures indicate that a B.Sc degree holder in 1969 earned 35 times the GNP per capita.[346]

There is unlikely to have been much change since then in the income differences between the modern and the traditional sectors in Bangladesh. Since employment in the modern sector needed at least a secondary educational credential or more, the pressure was always to expand these levels of the educational system at the cost of primary education. The powerful dominant group who controlled the decision making processes made sure that their children received the higher levels of education which was a visa for entrance into what Dore referred to as the modern sector bridgehead zone,[347] and therefore influenced the urban modern sector bias in development strategy. Thus, while this development strategy contributed to enhance the standard of living and the status of only a fortunate few, the majority of the populaton was driven into greater poverty and misery. Further, with poor performance of the economy the unemployment and underemployment rates among the educated have been increasing, while the majority of the children were being deprived of the basic primary level of education.

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[345] Coombs, *Educational Crisis*, p. 58.
[346] Computed from M. Akhlaqur Rahman, *The Analysis of Relative Wage and Salary Structure in Pakistan*, Planning Commission, Government of Pakistan, 1970, p. 62, in Husain, *Educational Reform*, table XI. The GNP in 1969-70 was about $55. See N. Islam, "The State and Prospects of the Bangladesh Economy" in Robinson and Griffin *The Economic Development of Bangladesh*, pp. 1-15. It should be noted that within this GNP were hidden wide disparities between the top few and the bottom few, since 20% of the population earned no more than $15 to $18 per annum.

In Bangladesh, as in many other Third World countries, the "modern-sector bias in economic activity created occupational and urban-rural differentials in incentives, which contributed to a related bias in the educational systems, i.e., a strong orientation toward the educational needs of the modern sector".[348] This expansion of secondary and higher education which benefitted mainly the urban middle and higher income groups increased the gap in income distribution and general inequality making poverty became more acute. Education, rather than being a strong force for equality, was acting to increase rather than decrease the income gap between different groups of people.[349]

Ironically, the expansion of secondary and higher education was justified on the grounds of democratization of the educational system for all. Increasing equality of educational opportunities for those with talent and ability regardless of their social origin was viewed as necessary for development. But equality of opportunity did not necessarily bring about greater equality in the society. It was only used as a new mechanism for justifying the way in which people retained or acquired their positions in society. Birth was becoming an increasingly unacceptable basis for occupational selection. The more acceptable idea was that the talented should automatically get into higher education and, therefore, secure access to the higher positions in the society. But, while the few very talented were likely to receive all the benefits from the society, the conditions of the underprivileged and not so talented tended to be ignored. More important still, the children from poor socio-economic background for many reasons, including economic ones, were not usually able to demonstrate their ability and therefore, either "dropped out" or were "pushed out" even before completing the primary cycle. They did not therefore have access to secondary and higher education which would have qualified them in society for the high positions. As Galtung argued, "for a position in a highly vertical society - after various obstacles...equality of opportunity is simply equal opportunity for competition into an unequal society".[350] In short, the educational system in Bangladesh was acting as a mechanism to legitimize the existing unequal distribution of rewards while giving token support to the idea that it provided opportunities for both the poor and the rich, and the urban and rural sectors of the population.

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[347] Dore, *The Diploma Disease*, p. 3.

[348] E. O. Edwards and M. P. Todaro, "Education, Society and Development: Some Main Themes and Suggested Strategies for International Assistence" in *World Development*, Vol. 2, No. 1, 1974, pp. 24-30.

[349] Jagdish Bhagwati, "Education, Class Structure and Income Equality", in *World Development*, Vol.1, No. 5, 1973.

There were two basic reasons why one could argue that the educational system in Bangladesh was inherently inegalitarian, in the sense that the students from poor families had less opportunity of completing a particular cycle of the educational system than the relatively rich students. These reasons were: 1) the private costs of primary education, especially "opportunity cost" of child's labor and "direct cost" of books, stationery, extra clothes and other things are relatively higher for the poor than for the rich students. 2) Education given at the primary level was so irrelevant to the life needs of the poor people including their chances of higher education and social mobility that the benefits of primary education were lower for this segment of the society than for the more well-to-do students. While this is true of Bangladesh it was a phenomenon characteristic of other LDCs.[351]

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[350] Johan Galtung, "Educational Growth and Educational Disparities", in *Prospects*, Vol. 5, No. 3, 1975, pp. 323-328.

[351] Bhagwati discussed why benefits from primary education are lower for lower income groups. His study indicates that the probability of finding rural jobs, such as in the teaching profession in primary schools, jobs in the post offices and such other jobs requiring primary (or secondary) education is lower for these groups; secondly, in so far as

[351] The relatively high cost and lower expected benefits of education usually meant that a family's rate of return from investment in a child's education was lower for the relatively poor than for the rich. The poor students were, therefore, more likely to "drop out" during the early years of schooling than the rich.

As a result of the high cost of education (opportunity cost plus direct cost), school attendence and school performance tended to be much lower for children of poor families than for those from relatively high income families. So, despite the existence of free primary education in Bangladesh, children of the poorer groups, especially in rural and marginal urban areas were often unable to proceed beyond the first few years of their education. One can therefore see why their school performance was relatively poor, a fact which has had nothing to do with their lack of cognitive abilities, but was more a reflection of their disadvantaged economic condition.

This exclusion of poor rural students from the primary level of the educational system was compounded further at the secondary and higher levels, especially at the university level which was highly subsidized by the government.[352] However, since most university students came from the upper and middle income families, highly subsidized university education using public funds extracted from indirect taxation of the poor reflected a subsidy or transfer payment from the poor to the rich - in the name of "equality of opportunity". In fact, the slogan "equality of opportunity" was a myth to deceive the poor section of the society and convince them of their inability and inferiority.

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[351] (cont'd)the higher returns accrue through higher mobility to the urban sectors where jobs requiring primary education are relatively less scarce, the lower income groups with less urban contacts and generally lower mobility would correspondingly have less access to such returns from primary education. See Bhagwati, "Education, Class Structure".

As far as the economic benefits accruing from their education were concerned, the poor students were again disadvantaged when one compared them to the rich. Even if the poor students completed their secondary and tertiary education, they had to face strong competition from the rich students for modern sector jobs. Here again, the students from well off families often had a comparative advantage due to the wide range of contacts and influences they enjoyed to support them in their job hunting activities. In other words, a person's social background had significant effect on income and the type of job even among students who completed the same level of education.[353] In the agricultural sector, as Bhagwati indicated, even if education might raise the productivity of the farm laborers, the benefits of this would accrue disproportionately to those rich farmers who owned the land.[354]

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[352] See Chapter 5.

[353] This is almost a common feature in the developing countries as already mentioned earlier. See for similar view H. Thias and M. Carnoy, *Cost-Benefit Analysis in Education: A Case Study of Kenya* (Baltimore: Ishra Hopkins Press, 1972); Carnoy, *Education for Alternative Development*, (Mimeo), Stanford University, 1980; M. Todaro, *Economic Development in the Third World* (London: Longman, 1977), p. 256.

The point was that in a markedly inegalitarian society such as Bangladesh education was class biased and did not provide equal education to all classes of people. Therefore, there was no justification for expanding higher levels of education in the name of "equality of opportunity". In fact, equality of opportunity in a highly unequal society had led to what Galtung called "degree-orcracy" tied to "technocracy" and "expertocracy" since technicians and experts were people with degrees replacing the old aristocracy.[355] Rather than equalizing the opportunity for higher education among the poor, the provision of tremendous government subsidy to education at this level only conferred benefits to the students from well-to-do families, and, thus, facilitated the perpetuation of existing inequalities. This was in fact true for nearly all the developing countries. As Bhagwati indicated:

> For each class of education the State (in capitalist LDCs) will subsidize the cost of education; the benefits of these subsidies will accrue disproportionately less to the poorer groups at each level of education the higher the educational level being considered, the higher will be the average income-level of the groups to which the students belong; and the rate of governmental subsidization to higher education will be greater than that to

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[354] Bhagwati, "Education Class Structure".
[355] Galtung, "Educational Growth and Educational Disparities".

primary education.[356]

Another point was that there was not much justification for expanding secondary and tertiary levels of education which has not been matched by a corresponding increase in employment opportunities. This could only aggravate the phenomenon of educated unemployment as it did in Bangladesh. A comprehensive survey of educated manpower which was undertaken by the Manpower Section of Bangladesh Planning Commission in 1973 indicated the extent of the volume of unemployment and underemployment of the graduates by type and category of education.[357] The survey did not include the self-employed persons, especially in the medical and legal professions, and therefore, the figures are subject to correction. The defence sector which employed a sizable number of educated persons was also completely excluded. Table 6:1 indicates the extent of unemployment and underemployment among the graduates from secondary and higher educational institutions - which amounted to 44% of the educated job aspirants in June 1973. Unemployment and underemployment were not only confined to persons with degrees in arts subjects, but also extended to those trained in science and technology. In fact, in view of the much lower output of science trained persons at the H.S.C. and B.Sc (pass) levels, the lower absolute number of unemployment and underemployment among these persons was no

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[356] Bhagwati, "Education, Class Structure".

[357] Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, *Employment Market for the Educated in Bangladesh* (Dacca: 1974); p. 2, in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 164.

Table 6:1

Number of Unemployed and Underemployed Educated Manpower in Bangladesh, 1973.

Educational Qualification	Number
S.S.C.	383,784
H.S.C (other than science)	107,535
H.S.C. (Science)	43,519
B.A. (Pass)	54,718
B.Com. (Pass)	38,046
B.Sc. (Pass)	28,120
M.A. (Humanities)	2,522
M.A. (Social Sciences)	4,558
M.A. (Economic Sciences)1	1,901
M.Sc. (Natural Sciences)2	396
L.L.B.	3,460
M.Ed.	840
Engineering technicians 3	638
Total	670,037

1. "Economic Sciences" comprise Economics, Statistics, Accountency, Management and Business Administration.
2. "Natural Sciences" comprise Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, Botany, Zoology, Geography, Soil Science, Geology, Bio-chemistry, Pharmacology.
3. "Engineering technicians" to whom the figure refers comprise holders of diplomas in Civil engineering, Survey technology, Building technology, Electrical engineering, Electrical installation and maintenance and Power technology.

Source: Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, *Employment Market for the Educated in Bangladesh*, June, 1974, in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 165.

indication that the situation was better for them than for those with qualifications in Arts and Commerce. There was a large percentage of unemployment and underemployment among high level natural science graduates, i.e., those with M.Sc. degrees, and also among engineering technicians of certain categories.

However, the table did not give the whole picture. The mismatch between the educational output and the needs of the country was such that there were surpluses in certain disciplines and deficits in others. Therefore, while the total number of M.Sc. graduates in natural sciences as a whole indicated an overall surplus in this field, there were deficits in the fields of chemistry, zoology, soil science, geology and bio-chemistry, which were however more than offset by large surplus graduates in physics, mathematics, geography and botany. Similarly, in spite of surpluses shown in some fields, engineering technicians as a whole indicate a deficit of 234 persons.[358]

The survey indicated sizeable deficits among educated personnel in a number of occupational categories, the most important ones being teachers, medical technicians, agricultural professionals, fibre technologists and middle level physicians. The total deficit of educated personnel amounted to 192, 281. However, assuming that a certain number of surplus educated persons in other disciplines could have been diverted to the right educational channels sufficiently early so as to eliminate the deficits noted above, the net surplus of educated persons would still have amounted to 477,756 in 1973.[359]

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[358] Government of Bangladesh, Planning Commission, *Employment Market for the Educated in Bangladesh* (Dacca: 1974), p. 32,42, in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 166.

This frustrating picture of unemployment among the graduates of higher levels of education provided a strong argument against the expansion of secondary and higher levels of education. A study by Jozefowicz indicated that during the pre-independence period, while the net stock of educated manpower was growing by 9% per annum, the employment capacity of the modern sector was growing at less than 5% per annum. As a result, the imbalance between the supply of educated individuals and the employment opportunities must have deepened.[360] These figures were for both West Pakistan and Bangladesh together. But, even in the absence of a breakdown of the figures by regions, it is not unreasonable to assume that the same percentage would apply to Bangladesh. In fact, the unemployment situation here was worse, since all the industrial development was concentrated in West Pakistan and there was always discrimination against Bengalis in job selection, even against those with the same levels of education.

Although there were no statistics available pertaining to the ratio between graduate output and the growth of job opportunities in the modern sector during the post independence period, it could be rightly concluded that the stock of educated unemployment and underemployment must have increased substantially over the last seven years of 1970s. This conclusion is based on the following facts. First, there was a very limited development in the modern sector in the pre-independence period, and the GDP in this sector was growing at a snail's pace since independence; Secondly, educational expansion at secondary and tertiary levels continued to take place but at a significantly higher rate than in the pre-independence period.

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[359] Ibid., see later in this chapter how expensive these levels of education are and how many primary students could have been educated.

[360] A. Jozefowicz, *Unemployment among the Educated Youth* (Planning Commission of Pakistan, 1970), p. 21.

Then the question arises: Was it justifiable to expand secondary and higher levels of education, especially in the science and technical fields, which are generally more costly, while there was no industrial development as such to absorb the graduates from these levels? Although a study by M. Obaidullah (1971) quoted by Faaland and Parkinson indicated that students graduating with honours in science and engineering did not have difficulty in securing employment[361], an Area Hand Book for Bangladesh noted that engineers graduating each year were too highly trained to be readily useful in the relatively unsophisticated industrial plants. In addition, many of the diploma graduates and certificate holders produced annually lacked the appropriate on-the-job experience to compete with non-graduates who would accept lower pay and would require no more immediate training by their employer.[362] In short, the science and technical education sectors failed to provide the right kinds and numbers of personnel required by the economy.[363] The question is then how could the First Plan of Bangladesh (1973-78) and the Education Commission recommend more expansion in scientific and technical education, while there were no job opportunites?

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[361] M. Obaidullah, "A Study of Employment Survey of Graduates, University of Dacca, 1971", cited in Faaland and Parkinson, *Bangladesh*, p. 161.

In fact, a study by A. Farouk et al. on science trained manpower indicated that science graduates fared no better than arts graduates in finding jobs. This study showed that between 1962 and 1968 the number of arts graduates in the live register of the East Pakistan Employment Exchange actually declined while the number of science graduates seeking employment through the Exchange increased strikingly.[364]

One adverse effect of this unemployment problem was the massive brain drain of the educated, especially science trained manpower to the economically more developed countries (MDC's). Although there are no statistics available on the percentage of graduates from university who emigrated to the MDCs, it can be assumed that this brain-drain was exceptionally higher for scientists and engineers, because of the limited capacity of the country to absorb the increasing number of graduates in these fields who became too highly specialized or too highly trained for the requirements of the occupations within the country.[365]

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[362] *Area Hand Book for Bangladesh* (U.S.A.:Department of Army,1975), p. 107.

[363] See for brief account on the point why Third World countries produce over qualified graduates and unemployment R. L. Irizarry, "Overeducation and Unemployment in the Third World", discussed in the second chapter in this thesis.

[364] A. Farouk, et al., *Science Trained Manpower* (Dacca: Bureau of Economic Research, University of Dacca, 1972), p. 45.

Producing educated personnel for unemployment or for export to technologically developed countries especially when one considers the amount of resources which were being spent on these students in higher education, particularly in the scientific and technical educational sectors, could only be seen as an act of great social injustice against the masses who were being denied a primary education in order that the above phenomenon could happen. The analysis of public expenditure on higher education by T. Islam indicated that per-student recurrring expenditure in the technical universities was substantially higher than those of the general universities. In the post-independence period, there had been a sharp increase in per-capita expenditure in technical universities, e.g., 127% in Engineering university and 43% in Agricultural University during 1970-73. During 1960s, per-student gross expenditure at current prices in general universities rose from 1,606 taka in 1960-61 to 1,850 in 1969-70. This was a rise of 15% over the decade. The increase continued up to 1972-73, rising by 12% during 1970-73.[366] Table 6:2 provides data on the recurring and capital cost per student. Since T. Islam's study did not present recurring cost figures for every level of education, most of the figures have been taken from another source, which gave the data for the pre-independence period. It can be assumed from the figures that the situation had not changed much except perhaps some increase at expenditure in some levels.[367]

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[365] See for a similar view provided by Hla Myint, "The Underdeveloped Countries: A Less Alarmist View", in Walter Adams, *The Brain Drain* (New York: Macmillan, 1968), p. 237. Although there are no statistics available on brain drain to provide evidence, observation within Edmonton, Alberta provides the fact that 80% to 90% of the emigrants from Bangladesh are scientists or engineers. In fact, the immigration law of Canada encourages only the graduates from science and technology to emigrate. This is also true for other technologically developed countries. Since there are no jobs in Bangladesh which can use the expertise of these personnel and provide adequate wages, and since in developed countries they accrue more personal benefits with their credentials and these countries also encourage these personnel, the percentage of brain drain among scientists and engineers tends to be very high.

The table (6:2) indicated the difference of expenditures between the lowest levels of education and the highest levels. The cost per student in the primary school was very low, only about 25 taka in 1967-68. For secondary high schools (general high, bilateral high and multilateral high schools), it was Tk. 241.53 in 1967-68. For general college, the recurring expenditure was 284.00 in 1972-73, but at the most elitist residential public schools - such as

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[366] T. Islam, *An Analysis of Public Recurring Expenditue* , p. 19.

[367] There is always some inconsistency in the data between two studies. For example, while T. Islam's study indicates a 15% rise of expenditure for general universities over a decade between 1960-61 to 1969-70 and 12% rise during 1970-73, and provided a gross recurring expenditure of 2063 taka per student in 1972-73, the study cited by Husain provided a total gross recurring expenditure of 2365 taka per student in 1969-68. Therefore, this limitation of statistics should be remembered.

Table 6:2

Recurring and Capital Cost Per Student in Public Institutions in Bangladesh. (in Takas).

Level of Institution	Recurring Cost Per Student (1967-68)	Capital Cost Per Student (1961-62/1966-67)
Primary Schools	25.32	180.00
Secondary Schools	241.53	1,582.00
Cadet Colleges	4,477.34	29,056.00
College (general)	284.00*	1,947.00
Primary Training Inst.	936.19	3,795.00
Junior Training College	783.73	5,805.00
Teachers Training	660.00	6,441.00
Techincal Institutes	1,650.20	6,020.00
Polytechnic Inst.	998.02	6,919.00
Engineering College	2,616.69	24,004.00
Medical College	6,900.00	76,700.00
Agricultural University	5,581.00	63,126.00
Engineering University	5,723.00*	46,958.00
General University	2,365.00	22,332.00
Institute of Post Graduate Medicine & Research	57,730.00*	N.A

Source: Husain, *Educational Reform*, table XII, p. 267.
*These figures are for 1972-73, taken from T. Islam, *An Analysis of Public Recurring Expenditure*, pp. 19,36.

Cadet colleges, which generally offer education for grades VII to XII, the cost of 4,477.34 taka per student was astronomically high. The per capita cost for general university students was Tk.2,365, which alone is about 94 times higher than the cost per student in a primary school. Polytechnic and technical institutions which provided diploma level technical education cost Tk. 998.00 and Tk. 1650.20 per capita respectively. Higher technical education was particularly costly, so the cost per student in an engineering college was 2,616.00 taka and, in a medical college, 6,900.00.[368] Expenditures per student in Agricultural and Engineering universities were tremendous; these were 5,581.00 and 5,723.00 (1972-73) respectively. So far, the most expensive institution has been the Institute of Post-Graduate Medicine Research in Bangladesh which cost 57,730.00 per student in 1972-73. Although this institution produces high calibre medical doctors (who often migrate to other countries), little attention has been paid to meeting the need for middle level medical technicians and nurses which seemed to be very high.

If one were to secure an average cost figure for students in a few higher educational institutions, such as engineering and medical colleges, Agricultural, Engineering and General universities, not to mention the Institution of Post-gaduate Medicine Research, one would see that the differences between the per capita costs of higher education and primary education would be substantially greater. The combined average cost per student in tertiary levels became 4,637.13, which was about 183.14 times the cost of a primary school student. This means that about 183 students could have attended the primary school at the cost of one tertiary level student. This sharp difference in the expenditure largely explains why the social rate of return on higher education in Bangladesh is lower than primary education. Table 6:2 also provides figures on the capital expenditure per student, and these follow a similar pattern. Therefore, based on the argument of social rate of return, the available figures suggest that there was an over-expansion of higher education relative to primary education.[369]

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[368] This figure is only for Barisal Medical college. Cost on average Medical College student is not available.

There were no statistics available on the social costs for all levels of education. But there were some statistics available on the social cost of university education. And, from the above discussion it can be assumed that the social cost of university education is much higher than that for primary education. From T. Islam's study, it appeared that in 1970-73 the social cost of general university was 7758.00 taka, of Agricultural university 17573.00 taka and of Engineering university 25,976.00 taka. In 1972-73, per student social cost in the Engineering university and the Agricultural university was about 3.5 and 2.5 times higher respectively than in the General University. Therefore, the completion of an engineering degree, which needs four years of education, would cost the society more than one lakh (100,000) taka. The question which then arises is whether it is socially and morally or even economically justifiable for the society to make such costly investment with its limited fiscal resources on highly specialized personnel, who would likely be if not unemployed, at least underemployed most of the time or would leave the country to seek better jobs abroad, at the cost of the majority of the population.

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[369] See Blaug, *Introduction to Economics of Education*, p. 241, and "Case for UPE" p. 5, which argues along this line.

The point then is why was there over-expansion of secondary and tertiary levels of education if it was socially not beneficial? The explanation for this lies in the fact that, as was observed in the previous chapter, the domestic elites, who were socially and politically powerful and made important decisions about education, preferred secondary and tertiary education, so that their children could have access to these levels of education and through this mechanism they could reproduce their socio-political and economic status.

Secondly, there was public demand for secondary and tertiary levels of education from the middle or upwardly aspiring working class groups in the urban centre. The pressure of these groups was quite strong and the Government which at first held office by election, needed the political support of these better organized groups. It, therefore, became more responsive to their demands for education as against those of the unorganized poor rural masses. During the early years of independence, the Government had to consider the pressures of these groups because most of them took an active part in the liberation movement and became more articulate about their expectations and hopes after independence. These urban middle and working class groups, whose upward mobility through education had long been suppressed by the Pakistani ruling group, viewed education as the only avenue through which they could change their status and prestige by securing access to the higher level jobs in the urban modern sector.

Therefore, their pressures aided the expansion of secondary and higher education at the expense of less articulate and fragmented groups of the society - the masses who were still being deprived of primary educational opportunity. The increased demand for education ultimately produced an over supply of qualified candidates beyond the demand of the job market, creating "educational inflation" in the country. Therefore, in Bangladesh, while the expected qualification of primary school teachers was 11 years of education (10 years general, plus 1 year training), 27.70% had Higher Secondary Certificate (12 years of general education) and 9.04% had university education in 1970s and the majority of them had the professional training.[370] Further, while primary school teaching jobs only required a person with 11 years' education, the employers still tended to appoint those with higher level qualifications to teaching posts. This was because the market was a consumer's market due to the supply of more qualified persons than there were jobs available. In this situation, the applicants whose educational levels were higher had a better chance to secure employment.[371]

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[370] Unesco, *In-service Primary Teacher Education*, p. 4.

[371] This is a general trend in all or most of the Third World countries. As in Guyana in 1940, one could become a primary school teacher with a primary educational qualification, but by the 1970s secondary education was increasingly required.

[371] The competition for the limited number of jobs available further contributed to the growing demand for yet higher levels of education in the country.[372]

This added to the pressure to expand secondary and tertiary levels of education and the increasing unemployment and underemployment problems among the graduates of these levels. It created further educational demand since the graduates could not find jobs that would provide them with comfort, prestige and a minimum standard of living. Therefore, the demand for more and more educaton continued, since people with relatively less education had always had less chances of securing better jobs. In fact, the whole system was a vicious circle as Dore had observed:

> The paradox of the situation is that the worse the unemloyment situation gets...the more useless educational certificate become, the *stronger* grows the pressure for an expansion of educational facilities.[373]

Thus, although the job opportunities were not very rosy anymore, the demand for secondary and tertiary levels of education continued, since with the acquisition of higher educational credentials increased one's chance of getting one of the economically more rewarding jobs in the modern sector.

Further, this continuously increasing demand for higher education resulted because of its highly subsidized nature.

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[371] (cont'd)See Bacchus, *Education for Development?*, p. 248.
[372] See R. Dore, *The Diploma Disease*, pp. 5-7 for how educational inflation is generating in the LDCs.
[373] R. Ibid. p. 4.

The reason for this was that while the cost of education was largely borne by the society as a whole, the returns at the higher levels benefitted the individuals mainly in the form of higher wages. Thus, higher education continued to be a privately profitable investment far beyond the point at which it has ceased to be socially profitable. M. Blaug has shown that the social rate of return on investment in education in India declined steadily from primary to higher education.[374] The study by Psacharopoulos indicated the same trend. He found the rate of return for primary education to be 19.4%, for secondary educatin 13.5% and for higher education 11.3%.[375] This finding would be true in most other LDCs, including Bangladesh. Therefore, it is evident that although primary education was more profitable socially, secondary and higher levels of education were often given priority in terms of finance because of the socio-political interest of the dominant groups.

There was no doubt that the expansion of higher levels of education accompanied by increasing unemployment among its graduates represented a considerable wastage in terms of the economic resources of the country. This could have been improved by modifying labor market practices in the reward system. As Blaug noted, "if the labor market ran smoothly and more or less instantly, it could have been adjusted long ago to the excessive demand for education by eliminating the earning differentials between more educated and less educated people".[376]

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[374] M. Blaug, P. R. G. Layard and M. Woodhall, *The Causes of Graduate Unemployment in India* (London: Allen Lane, the Penguin Press, 1969), pp. 218-19.

[375] G. Psacharopoulos, *Returns to Education* (Amsterdam: Elsevier Scientific Publishing Co., 1973), pp. 5-6.

However, this was not the intention of the elites and the better off people, since this income differential and high salary was the main attraction of education. In view of this, it is no surprise that the powerful groups had continued and will no doubt continue to allocate scarce resources to higher levels of education at the expense of primary education. Indeed, the extraordinary resource allocation to and the expansion of secondary and tertiary levels of education, which were essential for producing middle and higher levels of skilled manpower for the modern sector, and the neglect of primary education became indispensible for reproducing the social relations of production. In fact, the control of education by the dominant group in Bangladesh as in other LDC's and the differential allocation of educational resources in favor of this group became one of the principal means of controlling the society and reinforcing the social and economic inequalities that already existed.

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[376] M. Blaug, "Common Assumptions about Education and Employment" in Simmons, *The Educational Dilemma*, p. 149.

6.1 Brief Review and Summary of Historical Influences

As was observed in chapters 3 and 4, primary education was a sector neglected throughout the history of British India and Pakistan. Bangladesh, on becoming independent, simply followed the same pattern. The British colonizers of Bangladesh - then part of India - were primarily interested not in the socio-economic development of the country but merely in the exploitation of its economic resources and in developing a market for British manufactured goods. To do this effectively, it meant the establishment of new institutions and especially an administrative structure to manage affairs mainly in the interest of the colonizers. For this purpose, a cadre of locally educated individuals was necessary - English speaking Europeanized elite who would serve as middle men between the British administrators and the local population. This is why preference was at first given to higher education - its aim being to produce local administrative elite. Primary education was neglected - it was not felt that educating the masses would help the colonizers obtain their perceived objectives. Education was therefore used orginally as a means of dominating the population politically, economically and culturally.

Therefore, the expansion of higher education at the cost of primary education is not a new phenomenon. The colonizers introduced the system in their own interest and the system now effectively serves the interest of the local elites. However, the structural features of the society which helped to perpetuate the problems were the dualistic nature of the economy and wage structure, which were also introduced by the colonizers.

After independence from the British, the country (then East Pakistan) as a dependent region of West Pakistan, was again exploited socially, politically and economically by its new local metropole. Therefore, although the target of achieving UPE was set as early as the late 1950s and confirmed at the Karachi Conference, very little real effort had been made to achieve the goal. The country was especially neglected during its dependency on West Pakistan. In fact, during the Pakistan period, the underdevelopment of education was used as one more instrument in the exploitation of Bengalis. As it was observed in Chapter 4, the quota for Bengalis in the civil service was taken away on the ground that there was not enough qualified personnel in East Bengal and the resulting vacancies should be filled by West Pakistanis. In reality, there was not much effort to ensure a supply of qualified personnel in Bangladesh. Except for a few people from the elite groups, the majority of the population did not have any access to education. The discriminatory allocation of resources and facilities to Bangladesh in every sector caused the country to lag far behind in achieving many of the social goals including UPE which remained only as an officially stated goal with all its recognized advantages to the masses in the society.

The pattern of exploiting the masses did not change. It continued even after independence. This time exploitation and suppression came from the domestic elites of Bangladesh, who became the decision making body of the country.

6.2 Is there any Remedy?

In recent years the expansion of education in the developing countries, especially at the higher levels has come in for increasing criticism. Economists, educationists, policy makers and planners have suggested that, judging by the rates of return on various levels of education, priority should be given to the expansion of primary education and new alternative approaches and strategies have been put forward to achieve UPE in these countries. There is a clear case for controlling the growing increase in output of the highly educated manpower - of which there was already a surplus in Bangladesh. Further, continuing expansion of education at the higher levels will only aggravate the already strained relationship between the various groups in the country.

One should not, however, under-estimate the difficulties in the way of restricting the supply of such higher level graduates, considering that these students and their families constitute a highly articulate political force, which the authorities dare not defy - even in the interest of promoting the welfare of the general public. The authorities in Bangladesh have not been willing to restrict this expansion.

Economists such as Blaug[377] and Todaro[378] are convinced that the expansion of secondary and higher education has failed to attain even the narrow educational goals such as growth of GNP, not to speak of contributing to the attainment of wider social and economic goals such as social equality and equal income distribution. It was suggested that if students attending higher level educational institutions had to meet a larger percentage of the actual costs of their education by increased fees, the resulting rise in private costs will restrict the demand for these levels of education. Todaro maintained that a policy of declining subsidies would also respond to the valid criticism that the rising subsidies are inegalitarian and in fact, represent a subsidy to the rich by the poor.[379] Further it was proposed that there should be a quota system for talented and meritorious students in the secondary and tertiary levels of education. While these measures will be of some value in coping with the problem, they fail to get to its root and they are certainly likely to favor the children of the higher socio-economic groups at the cost of those with a poor rural background.

Among other measures suggested to increase the social returns to higher education was the introduction of a policy of compulsory national service. Under this program, graduates from higher education would be expected to teach or engage in approved social work in the rural areas for a certain period before they were awarded the graduate certificates.[380] Also, in line with this solution was the proposal by Todaro that the private share of educational costs should fall on the beneficiary and not on his or her family and friends (which is the common rule of Bangladesh). His point was that if private educational costs were financed directly out of a student's own resources or indirectly through loans repaid either by financial levies against the student's future income or by the contribution of his/her expertise to social projects, he or she would be making an additional personal contribution to reduce the cost to the society of his/her further education and training.[381]

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[377] Blaug, *An Introducation to Economics of Education*.
[378] M. P. Todaro, *Economic Development*.
[379] Ibid., pp. 251-52.

Another policy measure suggested by Blaug was that the public agencies should indicate in advance the level of qualifications required for particular jobs and select only individuals with that specific level of qualification - not allowing those who were "over qualified" to be considered.[382] This will effectively discourage private demand for higher levels of education when there are no clear employment prospects for such levels of qualification.

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[380] Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 171.

[381] Todaro, *Economic Development*, p. 252.

[382] M. Blaug et al., *The Causes of Graduate Unemployment in India*, p. 248.

Further, measures could be taken to reduce private demands for education by ensuring that the wages offered were more specifically related to jobs rather than educational credentials of the individuals. Generally in Bangladesh, as in other Third World countries, the practice in the public sector is to tie salaries to levels of education which simply fuels the increasing demand for more education. This practice, though profitable to the individuals, is more costly to the society.

Some other measures which have been suggested to discourage the demand for higher levels of education are that jobs requiring such education should be filled at the pre-university level and the necessary specialized training imparted on the jobs and also in staff colleges and universities with carefully planned programs of study.[383] Of course, not all the jobs should be filled in this way and some provisions will have to be made for "late developers" who are said to come from rural areas and poorer families. However, if requirements for jobs are restricted at the pre-university level, the rush to join college and university would be greatly reduced.

If these different measures were introduced in the LDC's, it is clear that the supply of highly educated manpower could be effectively restricted, and unemployment of highly educated manpower would be largely solved. But this would create unemployment among secondary school leavers and if secondary education was also to be restricted, it would increase unemployment among primary school leavers. A more effective strategy would be to focus on development efforts which would increase employment substantially at the lower levels. This would not only ease the unemployment problem substantially but would also make the policy of restricting the expansion of higher levels more socially acceptable.

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[383] Ibid., pp. 248-49. This is also recommended by M. S. Huq in his *Higher Education and Dilemmas of Poor Countries* (Bangladesh, Dacca: Foundations for Research on Educational Planning and Development, 1975), p. 17, discussed by Husain, *Educational Reform*, pp. 171-72.

While higher education should be restricted and its quality largely improved, it should at the same time be made more accessible to all. These objectives, however, are not necessarily incompatible. The present structure of education which allows entry into higher education only through secondary schools needs to be replaced by a new design which makes for multiple points of entry with students drawn from various occupations at different times for different lengths of time.[384] The courses offered should be flexible for full as well as part-time students who could be pursuing their courses of study on the campus and off the campus, making use of a varied media such as correspondence, radio and television, adapted to suit individual and occupational needs. Huq observed that, by allowing easy movement between study and work, it would allow an opening of the door to

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[384] M. S. Huq, *Higher Education Dilemmas*,p. 17, cited in Husain, *Educational Reform*, p. 172.

"work-oriented education" and "education-oriented work" and would set into motion a dynamic process of continuous renewal of education, stimulating occupational mobility and decreasing the social and economic inequalities.[385]

These are all suggestions to restrict the exploding demand for higher education and, taken together, these can run into volumes. On the other hand, there are also suggestions about how countries can set about achieving UPE. In fact, the main proposal put forward here is for these countries to restrict the expansion of secondary and higher education, therefore, releasing scarce resources which can be applied at the primary level.[386]

Arguments may be raised about expanding all three levels of education simultaneously. But, in Bangladesh, as in other developing countries, this is not financially possible since many of these countries are already allocating a large amount of their scarce resources to education and there are other social and economic problems which cannot be ignored.

It was observed that one of the factors which impeded the achievement of UPE in Bangladesh was poverty of the masses. The majority of the families were so poor that they could not bear the direct as well as the opportunity cost of sending their children to school. Therefore, another observation was that if the equality of educational opportunity was to be effectively pursued, provisions for helping the poorer families to meet the direct and opportunity costs must be made.[387] Although these humanitarian concerns are important and such affirmative actions as proposed might increase enrollment ratios in the primary level, the question is: Will it be possible to eliminate or even substantially reduce the existing inequalities in income distribution and the rigidities of the class structure by introducing such measures?

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[385] Ibid.

[386] See for similar account Blaug,"The Case for UPE".

The World Bank sector policy paper provides some further suggestions pertaining to the implementation of UPE by arguing that the problems of education such as inefficiency and inequality in educational opportunites are the results of mismanagement and planning, misallocation of scarce resources and the inaccessibility of better educational techniques. Thus, it was believed that improved quality of schooling can occur with good management of educational systems, and shifting the allocation of educational expenditures to the disadvantaged (rural and marginal urban) areas will increase the productivity of the educational system and promote equal income distribution, employment opportunity, equality and finally UPE. The assumption was that poverty, inequality and unemployment were the result of social and economic mismanagement or simply lack of resources. With educational expansion and improvement, the worst of a society's social, economic and political ills could be cured. However, this assumption failed to realize that even the provision of more resources to the education sector and better management will not solve social and economic problems such as inequality and unemployment - which were the main sources of the educational problems.

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[387] T. Islam, *Social Justice*, p. 61. Todaro also made a similar suggestion for subsidizing the able poor in the primary level in his *Economic Development*, p. 252.

There was also a recommendation to help the disadvantaged children. It was suggested that they should be provided with additional compensatory educational and social experiences to overcome their deficiencies.[388] To some extent, this proposal was tried out in the USA in the 1960s. It provided for the very young. The Head Start program placed emphasis on improving the skills of preschool youngsters from low income families in order to prepare them for entry into primary education. At the primary and secondary levels, compensatory education programs for disadvantaged children were also launched, and billions of dollars were spent on these efforts. However, according to the available evidence they culminated in massive failure.[389]

To achieve UPE in Bangladesh, suggestions were also made to use the religious schools, which form a parallel education system in the country and make a significant contribution to education at the primary level. Although, there are no statistics available concerning the percentage of primary school age group children in the *madrashas* (religious schools), it seems that many parents with a traditional outlook desired a religious schooling for their children. Therefore, if these schools were strengthened and well supported, they could be more effectively utilized to aid the drive for UPE.[390] In this connection, there is an example of another Third World country worth citing. In the Muslim dominant part of Nigeria where the attitudes and views of parents and society about girls' education were almost similar to those in Bangladesh, a study indicated that parents were more willing to allow their daughters attend the traditional religious schools rather than western formal schools. Therefore, in traditional religious schools (Islamiyya), female enrollments were usually higher than male enrollments.[391] In fact, the religious schools were the only institutions which provided education to many girls who would otherwise not have been permitted to attend schools. Bangladesh, it is suggested, could try a similar strategy in order to encourage girls' education. However, although these religious schools can provide some literacy or increase the numbers receiving primary education, these schools will remain unattractive and socially "second class" to many children and parents.

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[388] World Bank, *Education Sector Policy Paper* (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 1980), pp. 28-29.

[389] For critical account on the compensatory school program see M. Carnoy, and H. M. Levin, *The Limits of Educatonal Reform* (New York: David McKay Co., Inc., 1976), especially introductory chapter.

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[390] Sattar, *UPE in Bangladesh*, pp. 28-29.

[391] Mark Bray, *Universal Primary Education in Nigeria: a Study of Kano State* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 42,63.

Since 1970, international agencies such as the World Bank and Unesco also have been very concerned about the past developments in education and its consequences in the Third World countries. They have started making suggestions to the governments of these countries about exploring alternative approaches in education in order to overcome the problems which they face in their efforts to move towards UPE. Both the World Bank and Unesco contended that in an over-populated Third World country where it is financially not feasible to implement UPE, especially in rural areas, universal basic education as an alternative to UPE should be given the highest priority in educational policy.[392]

Basic education means formal primary education as well as non-formal education established in a complementary relationship with each other to enable the entire population to attain the primary level of education in the shortest possible time. As the World Bank Education Sector Working paper observed:

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[392] Unesco, *Learning to be: the World Education Today and Tomorrow* (Paris: Unesco-Harrap, 1972), p. 192; World Bank, *Education Sector Working Paper* (Washington D. C.:World Bank, 1974), pp. 28-29.*Education Sector Policy Paper* (Washington D.C.: World Bank, 1980), p. 10. A detailed discussion on basic education is provided by H. M. Phillips, *Basic Education: a World Challenge* (London: John Wiley and Sons, 1975).

> Basic education is an attempt...to meet the needs of substantial portions of the population who do not have access to even minimum educational opportunities. It is a supplement, not rival, to the formal education system, and is intended to provide a functional, flexible and low-cost education for those whom the formal system cannot yet reach or has already passed by.[393]

Similarly, Phillips defined basic education as both primary education in school, especially the elementary part of the cycle, and recuperative action through non-formal education for youths who missed the necessary formal schooling. Basic education is the minimum set of learning needs which individuals have for functioning effectively in their societies.[394] Phillips, in fact, offered advice for achieving UPE by suggesting fifty-four measures.[395] These measures were sub-divided into broad categories, such as planning and finance/population coverage, educational organization, Teachers, content, curricula, methods, research and development, and administration. He, however, admitted that the list was by no means exhaustive nor prescriptive but rather represented a set of pointers, out of which might be drawn guidance relevant to a specific situation of an individual developing country. Inherent in his 54 points was the notion of "alternatives" - alternatives in the sense of supplementary strategies which would render existing systems more effective.

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[393] World Bank, *Education Sector Working Paper*, p. 29.
[394] Phillips, *Basic Education*, p. 6.
[395] Ibid., pp. 230-235.

However, it was also recognized by the economists and planners that educational reforms alone would not bring development to the Third World countries. For this, a new development strategy would simultaneously be required, which would remove urban bias in development and would focus on the development of the total population aimed at improving the general standard of living of those at the bottom of the economic and social strata. While there is no intention here to suggest elaborate development strategies, which are, of course, the domain of economists and planners, a few points need mentioning to give an overall idea. First, there should be an increase in the supply of urban and rural job opportunities. For this, Todaro suggested that the governments of LDCs should:

1. reduce factor-price distortions to the extent that these enter into employment decisions in both public and private sectors;
2. give more careful consideration to improving rural infra-structure and to the possible location of new modern-sector activities in areas where wages have not yet reached the distorted levels typical of established urban centres;
3. allocate a larger share of public budgets to productive employment-creating activities and less to educational

expansion than has been the pattern in the past.[396]

Bacchus maintains that development strategy should involve a fuller utilization of locally available resources in all production efforts. In short, development strategy should gear to a strategy for self-reliant development by using more appropriate (labor intensive) technology and a production orientation geared mainly towards meeting domestic consumption needs. While these LDCs must continue to produce export goods to secure foreign exchange to purchase those essential imports which they cannot produce for themselves, their main concern should be meeting the local needs rather than producing goods for exports.[397]

However, any such strategy for rural Bangladesh would initially appear to go against the interests of the urban dwellers. There is, however, no inconsistency in the long run between the interests of the rural and the urban areas because, if the income levels of 90% of the population who live in the rural areas are improved, it will result in an overall increase in the demand for the products of the rural as well urban areas. Indeed a successful policy of mass development cannot fail to benefit urban areas as well. The removal of various price distortions and the adoption of appropriate technology will create more jobs and growth for both rural and urban populations. Therefore, the urban economy will have a sound economic base in the future and will not grow on the basis of the "push factors" promoting rural-urban migration caused by impoverishment of the rural masses.[398]

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[396] Todaro, *Economic Development*, p. 252.,

[397] Bacchus, *Educational Research and Training for Self-reliant Development*, pp. 8-9.

A viable strategy of rural and mass biased development and full employment would ease the problem of educational planning and development. However, it will still be important to formulate appropriate policies in the field of education and training. In fact, there should be a strong link between overall development planning and educational planning. With a large expansion of agricultural and rural based development, which has so far been neglected in Bangladesh, there will be an increased requirement for a wide-range of skill training for the lower as well as middle level personnel. While most of this training should be organized on-the-job, a sound basic education for both children and adults seems to be a most viable measure for initial understanding and acquiring relevant life skills. In fact, the concept of universal basic education for the LDCs became a popular notion in the 1970s in order to achieve goals of UPE, equality of opportunity, elimination of urban-rural bias and disparities, and overcoming of poverty and underdevelopment. Basic education, which is functionally defined as "minimum learning needs" for individuals, is viewed as a threshold level of learning required for participation in economic, social and political activities.

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[398] See for more detailed discussion on how to implement a new development strategy in Bangladesh, Husain, *Educational Reform*, chapter VII.

6.3 Can Reform in Education and UPE Help?

The international consensus about the need for minimum basic education seems to have an immense effect on Bangladesh as well. In 1980, the President and the Government of Bangladesh again expressed commitment to the achievement of UPE. By 1985, the country intends to enroll 90% of the primary school age group children in classes I to V.[399]

The seriousness of the intention by the Government to provide functional literacy for adults and increased access to basic education for all children is evident in the resource allocation in the Second Five Year Plan (1981-85) of Bangladesh. In this Plan, for the first time, conventional educational priorities have been revised by allocating 53% of the sum earmarked for education to the development of primary and mass education. Strong emphasis has been given to UPE programs which indicates the country's clear commitment to principles of basic human rights, social justice, equality of opportunity and efficiency.[400]

The main aims of the Second Plan (1981-85) are: 1) to widen the base of primary education; 2) to link education to employment; 3) to accelerate the increase of women's education and 4) to reduce the rural-urban gap in educational provision. It is also indicated in the Plan that since resources are limited, there cannot be a simultaneous increase in public expenditure at all the levels of education. It is felt necessary to economize in all other sectors of education through confining higher education only to the meritorious, increasing the efficiency of prevailing institutions by making the private sector pay more of the cost of higher education.[401]

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[399] Linda A. Dove, "How the World Bank can Contribute to Basic Education Given Formal Schooling will not Go Away", in *Comparative Education*, Vol. 17, No. 2, 1981.

[400] Ibid., also see Dove, *Teacher Training for UPE in Bangladesh, 1981-86.* (unpublished mimeo) University of London, London Institute of Education.

Education was viewed as the key to survival, social justice, political viability and eventually economic self-reliance for a country whose major resource is its 90 million people. UPE is seen as a necessary condition for enabling the mass of the population to participate in the development activities. As stated in the Plan:

> It is considered that the objectives of attaining a better quality of life for the masses can be realized better if the populaton is literate. The ability to read and write is an important asset for man in modern life. It helps in the efficient use of modern inputs in farming, transaction of business with banks, cooperatives or land administration, use of family planning devices and finally, and above all, in the use of democratic rights of citizens. Universal primary education is indeed a pre-condition of modernization. Removing illiteracy from the country is, therefore, considered as a strategy for social and economic development of the masses.[402]

The World Bank, which has committed itself to support low-cost basic education and rural training for low-income countries like Bangladesh, has agreed to help the Bangladesh Government to achieve the target of UPE by 1985. At present, the Bank is assisting the country with a soft loan to launch UPE in 40 *thanas* out of 473 *thanas* (local administrative units). It should be mentioned that the Second Plan of Bangladesh indeed acknowledges the almost desperate need to decentralise the administration of education especially for primary education.

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[401] Second Five Year Plan (draft) cited in Satter, *UPE in Bangladesh*, p. 88. It should be mentioned here that provision of confining higher education to the meritorious again will limit the education for students from better off families. See earlier criticism.

[402] Cited in ibid., pp. 87-88.

The objectives of the World Bank project reflects the intentions of the Government of Bangladesh to improve the quality as well as quantity of primary education. The objectvies are:

1. to provide expanded educational opportunities for universalizing primary education;
2. to increase primary school enrollment, particularly of girls;
3. to decrease wastage caused by dropouts and repetition;
4. to improve the quality of instruction and hence the level of achievement of the pupils.
5. to reduce unit cost.[403]

In the 40 *thanas*, which represent the most backward areas of the country with below average literacy, female enrollment, trained teachers and retention rate, there are 4033 schools, 736,000 enrolled pupils and 16,800 teachers. The total primary school age population is about 1.8 million.[404]

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[403] Directorate of Primary and Mass Education, "Project Summary", Universal Primary Education (IDA) Project, (Dacca, unpublished, n.d.); also see Dove, *Teacher Training For UPE*, p. 4.

Although it seems that the Second Plan is clearer about the objectives of UPE, the statements are quite similar to those made in the pre-independence development plans of Pakistan and the First Plan (1973-78) of Bangladesh. The only difference was that the resources allocated in the Second Plan of Bangladesh for primary and mass education were of a larger amount than before.[405] The underlying idea of the World Bank (IDA) project is apparent from its objectives. It is to improve the quality of education and to ensure that it be distributed more equally within the context of a society where marked social inequalities have persisted. The assumption is that by correcting inefficiency and expanding and improving educational facilities, some of the ills of the socio-economic system can be cured.

Indeed it is too early to evaluate and comment on the implementation of the Second Plan and the IDA project or even to speculate about their likelihood of success. But it is clear that these assumptions tend to overlook the fact that a significant part of these problems stems from the development pattern followed by Bangladesh. Rather than getting into the root of the problems, the country and the

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[404] Dove, ibid.

[405] However, it should be noted that in the First Plan (1973-78) whatever resources were allocated to primary education was not spent, on the other hand, resources for higher education were overspent. See previous chapter. So it is doubtful and too early to comment whether or not the allocated resource will be spent on primary and mass education.

World Bank are dealing with the symptoms. Thus, a great influx of resources in primary education and improved managment techniques will not solve social and economic inequalities. These are the attributes of the development pattern itself.[406] The education system and the social-economic system are the product of the present organization of production and the social class structure emanating from it. The educational problems are not the results simply of the lack of financial resources or the general inefficiency of the educational system as such. Therefore, educational reforms to equalize educational opportunity will have little or no impact on the income distribution or the existence of poverty. In fact, educational reform to equalize educational attainments would not change these basic realities of the economy. To do this other more crucial measures are required.

Furthermore, although it is yet to be seen, there is some doubt that basic education will be successfully implemented. First, the power elites will resist any change, including the universalization of primary education, if they have to give up their interests for the benefits of the masses. This is because an educational system, which is more relevant to the needs of the rural masses and which may result in increasing their efforts to improve their economic situation and lead a better life, may adversely affect the privilege positions enjoyed by the few elites.

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[406] See for similar view M. Carnoy, *Education For Alternative Development*, (unpublished memieo), Stanford University, 1980.

Secondly, since basic primary education, which the Government intends to introduce in Bangladesh, has to compete with formal education, it will always remain as "second class" education for the poor while formal education will, especially at the higher levels, always remain the preserve of the elites. Further, higher socio-economic groups will continue to send their children to formal schools thereby securing the benefits which are likely to accrue to them by obtaining employment in the modern sector, where formal educational credentials will still be more highly valued than any alternative "second class" education. In fact, for this reason, even the masses are not likely to support any alternatives to the formal western type of education for very long. Traditional formal education will continue to be seen by them as the only avenue through which their children can escape from the rural poverty-stricken life which they have lived, and improve their living conditions by acquiring better employment opportunities in the urban centres.

In other words, parental preference for formal education will continue even though much of it remains "irrelevant" to the real life needs of the majority of the rural population. This choice is likely to persist because the financial benefits accruing from formal education certificates will continue to be substantially higher than that from non-formal basic education. Therefore, what is needed is not only to implement rural biased developmental strategy as mentioned earlier, but also to reduce the income gap between traditional and modern sector employment. In fact, if the income gap between these two sectors does not decrease, basic non-formal and formal education will remain as dual systems mirroring the labor market of the country.[407] The graduates from these two kinds of institutions will receive different levels of rewards in accordance with their educational credentials which will prepare them for entry either into the traditional low paid or the modern high paid sectors of the economy. As Bacchus rightly argued, unless there is a drastic structural transformation in the reward system of the developing societies, non-formal (or any other alternative) education will remain as a mere peripheral activity in the field of education and never be fully accepted by the general population.[408] Therefore, rather than equalizing and eliminating disparities, universalizing basic education will still continue to reinforce inequality because it will in fact reinforce a dual system of education.

In conclusion, it can be said that in order to overcome the educatinal underdevelopment and to realize the broad goals of education, a fundamental change in socio-economic structure is essential in Bangladesh. Without a drastic change in the social, political and economic systems any educational reform is bound to be frustrating in terms of achieving goals such as equality. And, if the socio-economic structure remains the same and perpetuates inequalities in the society, then, why bother about democratization of education or any other educational reform?

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[407] See for some constructive criticisms on basic education and UPE C. Colclough and and Jacques Hallak, "Some Issues in Rural Education: Equity, Efficiency and Employment", in *Prospects*, Vol. VI, No. 4, 1976, pp. 501-25.

[408] M. K. Bacchus, "Structural Transformation As a Pre-Requisite for the Success of Non-Formal Education Programs in Economically Less Developed Countries" in *Canadian and International Education*, Vol. 8, No. 2, 1979, pp. 83-91.

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